

REX A. WADE

DOCUMENTS  
OF  
SOVIET HISTORY

1

THE TRIUMPH OF BOLSHEVISM  
1917-1919



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REX A. WADE



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1917-1919



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## APPRECIATION

*Special acknowledgement must be given to  
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Her dedicated and knowledgeable work  
contributed immensely to its completion.*



**DOCUMENTS OF SOVIET HISTORY. VOLUME 1. THE TRIUMPH  
OF BOLSHEVISM, 1917-1919. Edited by Rex A. Wade**

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## *Introduction*

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## PREFACE

Researchers who need documentary materials on the history of the Soviet Union previously have not had a single source to which they can turn. They—scholars, students, journalists, government employees, others—have had to hunt through a large number of diverse works, usually specialized by time period, topic or the organization which produced them. To do this successfully often requires considerable prior knowledge of the subject and about the document(s) needed, more than most users would have. Even then many sources, especially for the period before World War II, can be found only in the largest and most specialized libraries and thus are not available to most potential users. If found, many of the documents are incomplete, while others lack the contextual information needed by most readers today. Some important documents, of course, are available only in Russian.

This collection brings together the major documents of Soviet history in a multi-volume set which will cover the period from 1917 to the 1990s. It seeks to select the most important documents, those which best explain the development and policies of the Soviet Union. This includes not only those pertaining to politics, but also those concerning culture and the arts, education, the family, international relations, economics, and other aspects of Soviet society and history. A distinct effort has been made to go beyond government and party pronouncements, which all too often are the sole content of document collections. At the same time it must be recognized that such materials are an exceptionally important part of the documentary record and must be heavily represented. Given the nature of the Soviet system, certain leaders loom especially large and authoritative in some periods and their writings and statements are therefore heavily represented in the respective volumes. Both opposition and unofficial voices also play a role at times, and they too are represented.

Only contemporary documents are used, that is, those originating at the time. Memoirs and other retrospective writings, including “diaries” which have been rewritten, are not included. In making the selections for this collection I have attempted to select documents that (1) have long run significance for understanding the Soviet Union in that they set forth fundamental policies and principles, (2) mark important events of Soviet history and development, (3) illustrate the debates on major issues, or (4) suggest the temper of the times. Given these objectives, selection generally ignores whether a document is well-known or rare, although in some instances the latter characteristic can tip the balance in favor of inclusion. I acknowledge that no two people would make exactly the same selection out of the thousands of documents available, but I believe that the majority would agree on the

inclusion of most of those found here and hope that all will find this selection reasonable as well as valuable.

Each volume in this set covers a differing number of years. Some years and periods produced a larger number of important debates, decisions and documents than did others, and therefore the time span of each volume depends on the number of important documents (and their length) in given years. This seems preferable to forcing the documents artificially into a uniform number of years for each volume. There are practical limitations on the size of such a collection, however, and space does impose its own restraints on selection; "importance" must be defined at least in part by the amount of space available. This collection is projected to run about twelve volumes, which length seems a good compromise between the effort to include a larger number and wider range of important documents than any general collection has done hitherto, and the exhaustion of both editor and users.

The documents are arranged chronologically rather than grouping them by topic. While each method has advantages, the chronological approach is preferred for a collection such as this. It gives a better sense of historical development and in many instances—such as the early months of the Soviet state—makes clearer how events and issues crowded in upon one another, influenced each other, and how the leaders had to grapple with many pressing problems simultaneously. Moreover, a single document often relates to several topics. For readers wanting material on a specific topic, the subject index should lead them to all documents on that subject as well as to shorter references within other documents. A listing of documents by main topics also is included for quick reference.

A headnote is provided for each document for the purpose of placing the document in its historical framework, to indicate its significance and the more important issues it raises, and to make the necessary clarifications for readers. These headnotes are rather more extensive than in most document collections, on the assumption that most readers will have little knowledge of the historical context of the document.

One of the important principles guiding this collection is to publish each document in its entirety whenever possible. Deletion by editing for space can cause unintended shifts in meaning, and might exclude exactly those portions which a given reader needs. In some cases documents which simply are too long to be included in full, yet are too important to leave out, have been edited in order to include them. Such instances are noted in the headnote to each document and marked in the text by standard ellipses (...). Readers should be aware that some Soviet writers had a fondness for using ellipses for effect in their writings and so, in order to avoid confusing those with editor's omissions, the abridgement of a document is always noted in the headnote. Some peripheral matter, such as the names of signatories of formal government decrees, laws and treaties, usually are not included unless there is a special reason to do so. These were generally a formality and take up a great deal of space better used for additional documents. When the signature of a particular official is of importance, it either is included or indicated in the headnote.

All parenthetical references in the documents are those of the original author; my very few editorial clarifications within texts are marked by brackets [ ]. All notes at the foot of the page are ones appearing in the original document; Lenin in particular was fond of footnotes (and of italics for emphasis). Many documents have passages in italics or bold print, and these are given as per the original. These usually were included in translations and I have attempted to reinstate them where they were dropped by the translator from the Russian original, keeping in mind that in some instances there are different Russian versions, especially of early proclamations.

Within documents, the spelling and usage of the original translators generally has been retained. There seems to be little profit in trying to force general stylistic uniformity on the translated documents. Some especially archaic or confusing usages, such as *commissionary* for *commissar*, *workmen's* for *workers'*, etc., have been replaced by the more common modern term. British and American spelling are retained according to the respective translators, except where the cold logic of the modern computer has homogenized them beyond the intent of the editor. Minor corrections—obvious grammatical and spelling errors, archaic or confusing terminology, a word or two of retranslation, etc.—have been made “silently,” that is to say, without noting it in every instance. All substantial modifications of translations are noted.

Russian names and words in the headnotes are given in the slightly simplified Library of Congress transliteration style familiar to readers of English, with diacritical marks and hard and soft sign omitted, and the *sky* rather than *skii* ending for family names (Trotsky, Lunacharsky). Within the documents they are generally given according to the translators' usage except in instances where names had been transliterated in an unusual manner. To alleviate possible confusion, variant name spellings are listed in the index with cross-reference to the standard spelling.

For the benefit of those unfamiliar with Russian and the variations possible when it is transliterated into Latin alphabet, introduction to some of the more common ones might be helpful. One set of variations comes from two Russian letters, one of which is transliterated variously as *iu*, *yu*, or *ju*, and the other as *ia*, *ya*, or *ja*. Another common variation comes from the insertion of the letter *y*, most often before *e* to make *ye* or instead of *i* in connection with another vowel. Another common insertion is the letter *t* in front of *ch*. The apostrophe mark (') may be used to indicate the Russian soft sign or it may be omitted. Most readers are familiar with the three main sets of variations of name ending: the *-sky*, *-skii* or *-ski*; the *-ov* (*ev*), *-of* (*ef*) or *-off* (*eff*); the use of *-a* or *-aya* in some family names to indicate a woman (Stepanov/Stepanova, Krupskii/Krupskaia), which translators may or may not use. There are other variations, but these are the most common ones and the ones most likely to confuse a reader of this volume.

The various party and government names used by different Russian authors and translators deserves special attention. The government formed in October 1917 was called the Council of People's Commissars, but is often referred to by the Russian acronym *Sovnarkom* and sometimes by the English initials CPC. It was approved

by the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which also created an executive body to act for the Congress between its meetings—the Central Executive Committee, which is often referred to in documents by its initials, CEC (English) or TsIK (Russian). It also is important to keep these initials distinct from the initials sometimes used for the Central Committee of the Communist Party (C.C. or CC in English and TsK in Russian). The term “soviet” means in Russian “council;” many authors retain the Russian word *soviet*, now familiar to English readers, but some use *council* in the title of institutions containing that term. The Glossary will help readers unfamiliar with these and other Russian terms of the period, as will the headnote to documents containing them.

Dates are provided in both the Old and New Styles (the Julian Calendar in use in Russia and the Gregorian Calendar in use in the West, respectively) for documents dated before February 1 (14), 1918, in the fashion just given, and in the New Style only after that date. Sometimes there are variant dates for documents, among them the date when a resolution was introduced and when it was passed, the sending and receiving dates of a document, or the date when a law was passed by the Council of People's Commissars, when it was published in the newspapers, and when it was published in the official gazette of laws. Thus readers may find a given document dated differently in different sources. In most cases the earliest verifiable date when action was taken or a document created has been used.

Many of the documents given herein are being published for the first time in their complete form in English, and some for the first time in English at all, and yet others for the first time in a readily available source. The source for each document is given immediately following the document. A short form reference is used, and the reader who wishes can find the full citation in the list of sources cited. For some documents both an English and a Russian language source are given. For a single document this means that an English translation existed but with some deletions and that the missing passages have been added by the editor from the Russian source in order to make the document complete. In a few instances where two documents are given under one heading the two source references (of whatever language) refer to the different sources for the respective documents.

*Rex A. Wade*

## INTRODUCTION

The October Revolution of 1917 brought to power a Bolshevik Party committed to a radical reshaping of society in every way—politically, economically, socially, culturally. What that meant in detail, and especially how it might be accomplished through the agency of its new-found governmental authority, were questions to which the new rulers of Russia and their supporters largely lacked clear answers or even agreement among themselves. The result was a period of extensive debates and experimentation, carried out in the midst of civil war and economic and social collapse. The Russian Revolution of 1917 had torn asunder the fabric of society and a new one was not easily woven, although there was no shortage of proposed patterns or would-be weavers.

From October 1917 through 1919 events crowded upon one another in dizzying succession. The documents given here attempt to illuminate the most important issues, debates and policies of these years. The initial documents portray the efforts of the new government to define and establish itself in the first days and weeks after the seizure of power. This led first to debates about the purposes of political power and single versus multi-party government, then to the question of whether the Bolsheviks would accept the electoral results of the long awaited Constituent Assembly, and then, once they refused to do so, to a civil war which no longer could be avoided. The Civil War in turn forced many measures upon the new government, among them formation of a new army and some of the economic policies of what came to be called “War Communism.” Initially a complex struggle among various political viewpoints and small armed forces, the Civil War soon settled into a struggle between larger armies primarily representing the Bolsheviks on one side and the conservative forces of society—symbolized by the “White Generals”—on the other. However, throughout the Civil War other forces, especially nationalist and peasant movements, played a role as well. The year 1919 saw the decisive battles of the Civil War and, effectively, the Bolsheviks’ triumph.

The revolution was also—some would argue primarily—a social and economic revolution. While some of the economic and social policies of this period grew out of military needs, many reflected an ideologically driven desire to reshape society. The Bolsheviks moved quickly to issue a series of sweeping social and economic decrees, beginning with the decree on land, the decree on workers’ control, and then a large number of others on nationalization of property, education, the family, and others. These were designed to lay the foundation for a new society (or, in the eyes of some pessimists, to make restoration of the old order impossible even if the

Bolsheviks lost the civil war). In the process some Bolshevik theorists put forward ideas of how a new society should be organized.

Nor was it the Bolsheviks alone who offered visions of how society might be reconstructed. A portion of the cultural elite saw the revolution as meaning a radical redefinition of art and culture and set out their own visions of the new order, visions which strongly influenced the great artistic flowering of the era. Many of the minority nationality groups asserted themselves during the revolution and envisioned either complete independence or a dramatically restructured state which gave them extensive political and cultural autonomy. The Bolsheviks' political and military opponents, socialist and conservative, also expressed their views of how society might be reconstituted.

The revolution was an international as well as a domestic event. First of all there was the pressing problem of the World War and how to extricate Russia from it. This led not only to peace with Germany but also to Allied intervention. The Bolsheviks were not passive players on the international scene, for Lenin and the Bolsheviks saw their revolution as the beginning of a European and world-wide revolution. Establishing the Communist, or Third, International in 1919 was both a symbol of this and, they hoped, a step toward its success.

This brief span of slightly over two years was an exhilarating, if chaotic, period of political, economic, social and cultural revolution. It both exhibited the ideals of revolutionaries turned government officials and laid the basis for many of the lasting policies and institutions of the new regime. Although the revolutionaries were forced to retreat temporarily during the 1920s from many of their radical economic and social policies and some others were simply abandoned, in the actions and decrees of this period are found many of the fundamental principles and practices upon which the new Soviet state would be based.



## 1 THE YEAR 1917

### THE OVERTHROW OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT AND ESTABLISHMENT OF SOVIET POWER

October 25 (November 7) 1917

*Although the October Revolution was still in progress, the Bolshevik leadership declared the Provisional Government overthrown and "Soviet Power"—an increasingly popular rallying cry in 1917—established. This proclamation was written by Lenin the morning of October 25. The Petrograd Soviet's Military Revolutionary Committee was a key organization in both the October Revolution and the first weeks of the new regime.*

#### TO THE CITIZENS OF RUSSIA!

The Provisional Government has been deposed. State power has passed into the hands of the Military Revolutionary Committee, the organ of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies—which stands at the head of the Petrograd proletariat and the garrison.

The cause for which the people have fought: the immediate offer of a democratic peace, the abolition of landed proprietorship, workers' control over production, and the establishment of Soviet government—this cause has been secured.

LONG LIVE THE REVOLUTION OF WORKERS, SOLDIERS AND PEASANTS!

Military Revolutionary Committee of the Petrograd  
Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies

*Rabochii i soldat*, No.8, October 25 (November 7) 1917.



### THE BOLSHEVIKS' SOCIALIST OPPONENTS DENOUNCE THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION AND LEAVE THE CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

October 25-26 (November 7-8) 1917

*The Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets opened at 10:40 p.m. on October 25, with gunfire still heard in the city, and closed about 6:00 a.m. on October 26 after a night of stormy verbal exchanges. The main part of the Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs) and some smaller socialist parties rejected a "Soviet" or all-socialist government in favor of a broader coalition including the liberals. Committed to parliamentary democracy and fearing civil war, they considered the seizure of power then in progress to be madness. They denounced the Bolsheviks and left the newly opened Congress of Soviets in protest, leaving the Bolsheviks with an overwhelming majority in the Congress.*



## RESOLUTION OF THE MENSHEVIKS

## Taking into consideration

1. That a military conspiracy was carried out and achieved by the Bolshevik Party in the name of the Soviet behind the backs of all the other parties and fractions, represented in the Soviets;

2. That the seizure of power by the Petrograd Soviet on the eve of the Congress of Soviets amounts to disorganization and break-up of the whole Soviet organization and undermined the significance of the Congress as the authorized representative of the revolutionary democracy;

3. That this conspiracy throws the country into civil strife, thwarts the Constituent Assembly, creates a threat of military catastrophe and leads to the triumph of counterrevolution;

4. That the sole possible peaceful way out of the situation is to negotiate with the Provisional Government about the organization of a Government, based on all groups of the democracy;

5. That the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (united) considers it an obligation to the working class not only to repudiate, for itself, any responsibility for the activities of the Bolsheviks, who hide behind the Soviet banner, but also to warn the workers and soldiers against a policy of adventures that is fatal to the country and the Revolution.

The fraction of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (united) leaves the present Congress, inviting all other fractions, which, like itself, refuse to bear responsibility for the activities of the Bolsheviks, to meet immediately to consider the situation.

## DECLARATION OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARIES

The Socialist Revolutionary Fraction of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, in agreement with the Central Committee of the Socialist Revolutionary Party, declares:

1. The seizure of power, carried out by the Bolshevik Party and by the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies on the eve of the Constituent Assembly and a day before the All-Russian Soviet Congress, is a crime against the motherland and the Revolution, signalizes the beginning of civil war and the break-up of the Constituent Assembly and threatens to destroy the Revolution.

2. In anticipation of the outburst of popular indignation, which is inevitable as a result of the unavoidable breakdown of the Bolshevik promises, which are obviously unattainable at the present time, the Socialist Revolutionary fraction summons all the revolutionary forces of the country to organize and to stand on guard for the Revolution, in order, in the event of an impending catastrophe, to be able to take the fate of the country into their own hands and, without permitting counter-revolution to triumph, to bring about the speediest conclusion of a general democratic peace, the convocation of the Constituent Assembly at the appointed time and the socialization of the land;

3. Affirming the seizure of power by the Bolshevik Party and by the Petrograd Soviet, which is guided by them, the Socialist Revolutionary fraction imposes on them all the responsibility for the consequences of their insane and criminal step. Asserting, in view of this, the impossibility of common work with the Bolsheviks and, moreover, considering the Congress, because of the insufficient representation of the Front and of many Soviets, illegitimate, the Fraction of Socialist Revolutionaries leaves the Congress.

Chamberlin, Vol. 1, pp. 470-471. See Permissions page.

THE MENSHEVIK-INTERNATIONALISTS APPEAL TO THE CONGRESS OF  
SOVIETS FOR A BROAD SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT AND WARN OF CIVIL WAR

October 25-26 (November 7-8) 1917

*The Menshevik-Internationalists advocated a broad socialist coalition government. At the Congress their leader, Iu. O. Martov, appealed for this again and warned of the danger of a bloody civil war. These same arguments were made by other groups in various forums during the next few days and debate over forming a broad socialist coalition government became a major political controversy. Martov's speech also foreshadows the problem many socialists would have throughout the Civil War with the Bolshevik actions: they opposed the more authoritarian and one-party rule aspects, but lingering commitment to socialist unity made it difficult for them to espouse open opposition.*

In view of the fact

(1) that the coup d'état, which placed all authority in Petrograd in the hands of the Military Revolutionary Committee on the eve of the opening of the Congress, was accomplished by the Bolshevik Party alone and by means of a military conspiracy;

(2) that this coup d'état threatens to produce bloodshed, civil war, and the triumph of a counter-revolution which is likely to drown in blood the proletarian movement together with all the conquests of the revolution;

(3) that the sole remedy which might still prevent the outbreak of civil war is an agreement between the insurgent part of the democracy and the remaining democratic organizations, having in view the formation of a democratic government acceptable to the whole revolutionary democracy and to whom the Provisional Government might hand over its authority without a struggle—the Menshevik group calls upon the Congress to resolve that it is absolutely necessary to end the crisis in a peaceful manner, by forming a government composed of representatives of all the democratic elements.

With this in view, the Menshevik-Internationalist group invites the Congress to appoint a delegation to enter into negotiations with the other organs of democracy and with all the Socialist parties.

Pending the report of that delegation the Menshevik-Internationalists propose that the Congress suspend its work.

Bunyan and Fisher, pp. 112-113, with omissions filled in by the editor from *Novaia zhizn'*, No. 163, November 8 (October 26) 1917. See Permissions page.



RESOLUTION OF THE SECOND CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE MENSHEVIKS AND SRs

October 25-26 (November 7-8) 1917

*The Congress, in a resolution read by Trotsky, heaped abuse on those who left. With the walkout and the rejection of appeals to compromise, the Congress was left firmly in the hands of the Bolsheviks.*

The Second All-Russian Congress declares: The withdrawal of the Menshevik and Social Revolutionary delegates from the Congress is an impotent and criminal attempt to disrupt

the empowered All-Russian representation of the worker and soldier masses at the very moment when the vanguard of those masses, sword in hand, are defending the Congress and the revolution against the attacks of the counter-revolution.

The compromising parties have done immeasurable harm to the revolution by their past policy and have betrayed themselves hopelessly in the eyes of the workers, peasants and soldiers.

The compromisers prepared and approved of the disastrous offensive of June 18, which led the army to the verge of destruction.

The compromisers supported the Government of capital punishment and betrayal of the people. The compromisers supported for seven months the policy of systematic betrayal of the peasants on the land question.

The opportunists supported the destruction of the revolutionary organisations, the disarming of the workers, the introduction of Kornilovist discipline into the army and the senseless prolongation of the bloody slaughter.

The opportunists have by their actions helped their bourgeois allies, have increased the economic ruin of the country, condemning millions of the working masses to death.

Having lost the confidence of the masses by this policy, the compromisers have cunningly and shamelessly retained their positions at the head of the Soviet and army organisations where no new elections have taken place for a long time.

The [former] Central Executive Committee has, because of the above, attempted to disrupt the Congress by any means in its power, relying on the support of the opportunist army committees and on the direct support of government forces.

When this policy of obstructing and falsifying the expressed opinion of the revolutionary classes utterly collapsed, when the Provisional Government fell under the pressure of the Petrograd workers and soldiers, when the All-Russian Soviet Congress showed a clear majority for the party of revolutionary socialism, for the Bolsheviks, and when an uprising was shown to be the only way out for the revolutionary masses whom the bourgeoisie and their followers had cheated and tortured—then the opportunists drew the final deduction and broke with the Soviets whose strength they had thought to undermine.

The withdrawal of the compromisers does not weaken the Soviets, but strengthens them; for it cleanses the workers' and peasants' revolution of counter-revolutionary elements.

After hearing the declaration of the Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, the Second All-Russian Congress continues its work, its tasks being determined by the will of the working people and by their insurrection on October 24th and 25th.

Down with the compromisers!

Down with the lackeys of the bourgeoisie!

Long live the victorious insurrection of the Soldiers, Workers and Peasants!

Astrov, Vol. 2, pp. 441-442, with modifications by the editor.



## PROCLAMATION OF ASSUMPTION OF POWER BY THE CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

October 25-26 (November 7-8) 1917

*The Bolshevik leaders quickly moved to have the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies claim power in its name. The proclamation to this effect,*

written by Lenin, was adopted near the end of the first meeting of the Congress, which convened at 10:45 p.m. on October 25 and adjourned around 6 a.m. on October 26. This based the revolution and new government on the widely popular institution of soviets (literally, councils) of workers', soldiers', and peasants' deputies which had sprung up across Russia during 1917. The declaration also hastened to promise the population that the most pressing problems facing the country would be dealt with promptly, that the Constituent Assembly would meet as scheduled and that the gains of the revolution would be safeguarded. Reflecting that the October Revolution was still in progress and the uncertain security of the newly proclaimed government, it also called for soldiers to defend it against the expected counterattacks.

#### TO WORKERS, SOLDIERS AND PEASANTS!

The Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies has opened. The vast majority of the Soviets are represented at the Congress. A number of delegates from the Peasants' Soviets are also present. The mandate of the compromising Central Executive Committee has terminated. Backed by the will of the vast majority of the workers, soldiers and peasants, backed by the victorious uprising of the workers and the garrison which has taken place in Petrograd, the Congress takes power into its own hands.

The Provisional Government has been overthrown. The majority of the members of the Provisional Government have already been arrested.

The Soviet Government will propose an immediate democratic peace to all the nations and an immediate armistice on all fronts. It will secure the transfer of the land of the landed proprietors, the crown and the monasteries to the peasant committees without compensation; it will protect the rights of the soldiers by introducing complete democracy in the army; it will establish workers' control over production; it will ensure the convocation of the Constituent Assembly at the time appointed; it will see to it that bread is supplied to the cities and prime necessities to the villages; it will guarantee all the nations inhabiting Russia the genuine right to self-determination.

The Congress decrees: all power in the localities shall pass to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, which must guarantee genuine revolutionary order.

The Congress calls upon the soldiers in the trenches to be vigilant and firm. The Congress of Soviets is convinced that the revolutionary army will be able to defend the revolution against all attacks of imperialism until such time as the new government succeeds in concluding a democratic peace, which it will propose directly to all peoples. The new government will do everything to fully supply the revolutionary army, by means of a determined policy of requisitions and taxation of the propertied classes, and also will improve the condition of soldiers' families.

The Kornilov men—Kerensky, Kaledin and others—are attempting to bring troops against Petrograd. Several detachments, whom Kerensky had moved by deceiving them, have come over to the side of the insurgent people.

**SOLDIERS, ACTIVELY RESIST KERENSKY THE KORNILOVITE! BE ON YOUR GUARD!**

**RAILWAYMEN, HOLD UP ALL TROOP TRAINS DISPATCHED BY KERENSKY AGAINST PETROGRAD!**

**SOLDIERS, WORKERS IN FACTORY AND OFFICE, THE FATE OF THE REVOLUTION AND THE FATE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEACE IS IN YOUR HANDS!**

**LONG LIVE THE REVOLUTION!**

**The All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.**

**The Delegates from the Peasants' Soviets.**

Lenin, Vol. 26, pp. 247-248, with minor corrections from *Rabochii i soldat*, No. 9, October 26, 1917.

## DECREE ON PEACE

October 26 (November 8) 1917

*War-weariness and a desire for peace were among the most pressing problems—perhaps the most pressing—facing the new government, which was well aware of the role those factors had played in the downfall of its predecessor. The appeal to all belligerents for an immediate peace was written by Lenin and read to the Congress by him, with introductory and concluding remarks, both of which are given here.*

## REPORT ON PEACE, OCTOBER 26 (NOVEMBER 8)

The question of peace is a burning question, the painful question of the day. Much has been said and written on the subject, and all of you, no doubt, have discussed it quite a lot. Permit me, therefore, to proceed to read a declaration which the government you elect should publish.

## DECREE ON PEACE

The workers' and peasants' government, created by the Revolution of October 24-25 and basing itself on the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, calls upon all the belligerent peoples and their governments to start immediate negotiations for a just, democratic peace.

By a just or democratic peace, for which the overwhelming majority of the working class and other working people of all the belligerent countries, exhausted, tormented and racked by the war, are craving—a peace that has been most definitely and insistently demanded by the Russian workers and peasants ever since the overthrow of the tsarist monarchy—by such a peace the government means an immediate peace without annexations (i.e., without the seizure of foreign lands, without the forcible incorporation of foreign nations) and without indemnities.

The Government of Russia proposes that this kind of peace be immediately concluded by all the belligerent nations, and expresses its readiness to take all the resolute measures now, without the least delay, pending the final ratification of all the terms of such a peace by authoritative assemblies of the people's representatives of all countries and all nations.

In accordance with the sense of justice of democrats in general, and of the working classes in particular, the government conceives the annexation or seizure of foreign lands to mean every incorporation of a small or weak nation into a large or powerful state without the precisely, clearly and voluntarily expressed consent and wish of that nation, irrespective of the time when such forcible incorporation took place, irrespective also of the degree of development or backwardness of the nation forcibly annexed to the given state, or forcibly retained within its borders, and irrespective, finally, of whether this nation is in Europe or in distant, overseas countries.

If any nation whatsoever is forcibly retained within the borders of a given state, if, in spite of its expressed desire—no matter whether expressed in the press, at public meetings, in the decisions of parties, or in protests and uprisings against national oppression—it is not accorded the right to decide the forms of its state existence by a free vote, taken after the complete evacuation of the troops of the incorporating or, generally, of the stronger nation and without the least pressure being brought to bear, such incorporation is annexation, i.e., seizure and violence.

The government considers it the greatest of crimes against humanity to continue this war over the issue of how to divide among the strong and rich nations the weak nationalities they have conquered, and solemnly announces its determination immediately to sign terms of peace to stop this war on the terms indicated, which are equally just for all nationalities without exception.

At the same time the government declares that it does not regard the above-mentioned peace terms as an ultimatum; in other words, it is prepared to consider any other peace terms, and insists only that they be advanced by any of the belligerent countries as speedily as possible, and that in the peace proposals there should be absolute clarity and the complete absence of all ambiguity and secrecy.

The government abolishes secret diplomacy, and, for its part, announces its firm intention to conduct all negotiations quite openly in full view of the whole people. It will proceed immediately with the full publication of the secret treaties endorsed or concluded by the government of landowners and capitalists from February to October 25, 1917. The government proclaims the unconditional and immediate annulment of everything contained in these secret treaties insofar as it is aimed, as is mostly the case, at securing advantages and privileges for the Russian landowners and capitalists and at the retention, or extension, of the annexations made by the Great Russians.

Proposing to the governments and peoples of all countries immediately to begin open negotiations for peace, the government, for its part, expresses its readiness to conduct these negotiations in writing, by telegraph, and by negotiations between representatives of the various countries, or at a conference of such representatives. In order to facilitate such negotiations, the government is appointing its plenipotentiary representative to neutral countries.

The government proposes an immediate armistice to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries, and, for its part, considers it desirable that this armistice should be concluded for a period of not less than three months, i.e., a period long enough to permit the completion of negotiations for peace with the participation of the representatives of all peoples or nations, without exception, involved in or compelled to take part in the war, and the summoning of authoritative assemblies of the representatives of the peoples of all countries for the final ratification of the peace terms.

While addressing this proposal for peace to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries, the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government of Russia appeals in particular also to the class-conscious workers of the three most advanced nations of mankind and the largest states participating in the present war, namely, Great Britain, France and Germany. The workers of these countries have made the greatest contributions to the cause of progress and socialism; they have furnished the great examples of the Chartist movement in England, a number of revolutions of historic importance effected by the French proletariat, and, finally, the heroic struggle against the Anti-Socialist Law in Germany and the prolonged, persistent and disciplined work of creating mass proletarian organisations in Germany, a work which serves as a model to the workers of the whole world. All these examples of proletarian heroism and historical creative work are a pledge that the workers of the countries mentioned will understand the duty that now faces them of saving mankind from the horrors of war and its consequences, that these workers, by comprehensive, determined, and supremely vigorous action, will help us to conclude peace successfully, and at the same time emancipate the labouring and exploited masses of our population from all forms of slavery and all forms of exploitation.

[After approval of the Decree, Lenin concluded:]

The workers' and peasants' government, created by the Revolution of October 24-25 and basing itself on the support of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, must start immediate negotiations for peace. Our appeal must be addressed both to the governments and to the peoples. We cannot ignore the governments, for that would delay the possibility of concluding peace, and the people's government dare not do that; but we have no right not to appeal to the peoples at the same time. Everywhere there are differences between the governments and the peoples, and we must therefore help the peoples to

intervene in questions of war and peace. We will, of course, insist upon the whole of our programme for a peace without annexations and indemnities. We shall not retreat from it; but we must not give our enemies an opportunity to say that their conditions are different from ours and that therefore it is useless to start negotiations with us. No, we must deprive them of that advantageous position and not present our terms in the form of an ultimatum. Therefore the point is included that we are willing to consider any peace terms and all proposals. We shall consider them, but that does not necessarily mean that we shall accept them. We shall submit them for consideration to the Constituent Assembly which will have the power to decide what concessions can and what cannot be made. We are combating the deception practised by governments which pay lip-service to peace and justice, but in fact wage annexationist and predatory wars. No government will say all it thinks. We, however, are opposed to secret diplomacy and will act openly in full view of the whole people. We do not close our eyes to difficulties and never have done. War cannot be ended by refusal, it cannot be ended by one side. We are proposing an armistice for three months, but shall not reject a shorter period, so that the exhausted army may breathe freely, even if only for a little while; moreover, in all the civilised countries national assemblies must be summoned for the discussion of the terms.

In proposing an immediate armistice, we appeal to the class-conscious workers of the countries that have done so much for the development of the proletarian movement. We appeal to the workers of Britain, where there was the Chartist movement, to the workers of France, who have in repeated uprisings displayed the strength of their class-consciousness, and to the workers of Germany, who waged the fight against the Anti-Socialist Law and have created powerful organisations.

In the Manifesto of March 14, we called for the overthrow of the bankers, but, far from overthrowing our own bankers, we entered into an alliance with them. Now we have overthrown the government of the bankers.

The governments and the bourgeoisie will make every effort to unite their forces and drown the workers' and peasants' revolution in blood. But the three years of war have been a good lesson to the masses—the Soviet movement in other countries and the mutiny in the German navy, which was crushed by the officer cadets of Wilhelm the hangman. Finally, we must remember that we are not living in the depths of Africa, but in Europe, where news can spread quickly.

The workers' movement will triumph and will have the way to peace and socialism.

*(Prolonged applause.)*

Lenin, Vol. 26, pp. 249-253.



## DECREE ON LAND

October 26 (November 8) 1917

*Land distribution was, with peace, the other most pressing problem facing the new government as well as a cause of the fall of its predecessor. Therefore the Bolsheviks also put a decree on land distribution before the second meeting of the Congress, just after the decree on peace. Lenin presented and defended the decree, which he had written. One of the most interesting features of the decree is its inclusion of a "mandate" which had been compiled from 242 local peasant mandates in midsummer, 1917 and published in the newspaper of the All-Russian*

*Congress of Peasants' Deputies (the Congress was SR controlled and opposed the Bolshevik Revolution). With this the decree was sufficiently similar to the SR program to provoke both comment and objection in the course of the debates. This may have helped hold the support of the Left SRs, the main non-Bolshevik party still at the Congress of Soviets and in the new Central Executive Committee which it elected. The first two paragraphs below are Lenin's introductory comments to the Congress.*

We maintain that the revolution has proved and demonstrated how important it is that the land question should be put clearly. The outbreak of the armed uprising, the second, October, Revolution, clearly proves that the land must be turned over to the peasants. The government that has been overthrown and the compromising parties of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries committed a crime when they kept postponing the settlement of the land question on various pretexts and thereby brought the country to economic chaos and a peasant revolt. Their talk about riots and anarchy in the countryside sounds false, cowardly, and deceitful. Where and when have riots and anarchy been provoked by wise measures? If the government had acted wisely, and if their measures had met the needs of the poor peasants, would there have been unrest among the peasant masses? But all the measures of the government, approved by the Avksentyev and Dan Soviets, went counter to the interests of the peasants and compelled them to revolt.

Having provoked the revolt, the government raised a hue and cry about riots and anarchy, for which they themselves were responsible. They were going to crush it by blood and iron, but were themselves swept away by the armed uprising of the revolutionary soldiers, sailors and workers. The first duty of the government of the workers' and peasants' revolution must be to settle the land question, which can pacify and satisfy the vast masses of poor peasants. I shall read to you the clauses of a decree your Soviet Government must issue. In one of the clauses of this decree is embodied the Mandate to the Land Committees, compiled on the basis of 242 mandates from local Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

#### DECREE ON LAND

(1) Landed proprietorship is abolished forthwith without any compensation.

(2) The landed estates, as also all crown, monastery, and church lands, with all their livestock, implements, buildings and everything pertaining thereto, shall be placed at the disposal of the volost land committees and the uyezd Soviet of Peasants' Deputies pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly.

(3) All damage to confiscated property, which henceforth belongs to the whole people, is proclaimed a grave crime to be punished by the revolutionary courts. The uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies shall take all necessary measures to assure the observance of the strictest order during the confiscation of the landed estates, to determine the size of estates, and the particular estates subject to confiscation, to draw up exact inventories of all property confiscated and to protect in the strictest revolutionary way all agricultural enterprises transferred to the people, with all buildings, implements, livestock, stocks of produce, etc.

(4) The following peasant Mandate, compiled by the newspaper *Izvestia Vserossiiskogo Soveta Krestyanskikh Deputatov* from 242 local peasant mandates and published in No. 88 of that paper (Petrograd, No. 88, August 19, 1917), shall serve everywhere to guide the implementation of the great land reforms until a final decision on the latter is taken by the Constituent Assembly.

#### Peasant Mandate on the Land

"The land question in its full scope can be settled only by the popular Constituent Assembly.

"The most equitable settlement of the land question is to be as follows:

"(1) *Private ownership of land shall be abolished forever; land shall not be sold, purchased, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated.*



"All land, whether *state, crown, monastery, church, factory, entailed, private, public, peasant, etc.*, shall be confiscated without compensation and become the property of the whole people, and pass into the use of all those who cultivate it.

"Persons who suffer by this property revolution shall be deemed to be entitled to public support only for the period necessary for adaptation to the new conditions of life.

"(2) All mineral wealth—ore, oil, coal, salt, etc., and also all forests and waters of state importance, shall pass into the exclusive use of the state. All the small streams, lakes, woods, etc., shall pass into the use of the communes, to be administered by the local self-government bodies.

"(3) Lands on which *high-level scientific* farming is practised—orchards, plantations, seed plots, nurseries, hothouses, etc.—*shall not be divided up, but shall be converted into model farms*, to be turned over for exclusive use to the state or to the communes, depending on the size and importance of such lands.

"Household land in towns and villages, with orchards and vegetable gardens, shall be reserved for the use of their present owners, the size of the holdings, and the size of tax levied for the use thereof, to be determined by law.

"(4) Stud farms, government and private pedigree stock and poultry farms, etc., shall be confiscated and become the property of the whole people, and pass into the exclusive use of the state or a commune, depending on the size and importance of such farms.

"The question of compensation shall be examined by the Constituent Assembly.

"(5) All livestock and farm implements of the confiscated estates shall pass into the exclusive use of the state or a commune, depending on their size and importance, and no compensation shall be paid for this.

"The farm implements of peasants with little land shall not be subject to confiscation.

"(6) The right to use the land shall be accorded to all citizens of the Russian state (without distinction of sex) desiring to cultivate it by their own labour, with the help of their families, or in partnership, but only as long as they are able to cultivate it. The employment of hired labour is not permitted.

"In the event of the temporary physical disability of any member of a village commune for a period of up to two years, the village commune shall be obliged to assist him for this period by collectively cultivating his land until he is again able to work.

"Peasants who, owing to old age or ill-health, are permanently disabled and unable to cultivate the land personally, shall lose their right to the use of it but, in return, shall receive a pension from the state.

"(7) Land tenure shall be on an equality basis, i.e., the land shall be distributed among the working people in conformity with a labour standard or a subsistence standard, depending on local conditions.

"There shall be absolutely no restriction on the forms of land tenure—household, farm, communal, or co-operative, as shall be decided in each individual village and settlement.

"(8) All land, when alienated, shall become part of the national land fund. Its distribution among the peasants shall be in charge of the local and central self-government bodies, from democratically organized village and city communes, in which there are no distinctions of social rank, to central regional government bodies.

"The land fund shall be subject to periodical redistribution, depending on the growth of population and the increase in the productivity and the scientific level of farming.

"When the boundaries of allotments are altered, the original nucleus of the allotment shall be left intact.

"The land of the members who leave the commune shall revert to the land fund; preferential right to such land shall be given to the near relatives of the members who have left, or to persons designated by the latter.

"The cost of fertilisers and improvements put into the land, to the extent that they have not been fully used up at the time the allotment is returned to the land fund, shall be compensated.

"Should the available land fund in a particular district prove inadequate for the needs of the local population, the surplus population shall be settled elsewhere.

"The state shall take upon itself the organisation of resettlement and shall bear the cost thereof, as well as the cost of supplying implements, etc.

"Resettlement shall be effected in the following order: landless peasants desiring to resettle, then members of the commune who are of vicious habits, deserters, and so on, and, finally, by lot or by agreement."

The entire contents of this Mandate, as expressing the absolute will of the vast majority of the class-conscious peasants of all Russia, is proclaimed a provisional law, which, pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, shall be carried into effect as far as possible immediately, and as to certain of its provisions with due gradualness, as shall be determined by the uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

(5) The land of ordinary peasants and ordinary Cossacks shall not be confiscated.

[After debate, Lenin continued:]

Voices are being raised here that the decree itself and the Mandate were drawn up by the Socialist-Revolutionaries. What of it? Does it matter who drew them up? As a democratic government, we cannot ignore the decision of the masses of the people, even though we may disagree with it. In the fire of experience, applying the decree in practice, and carrying it out locally, the peasants will themselves realise where the truth lies. And even if the peasants continue to follow the Socialist-Revolutionaries, even if they give this party a majority in the Constituent Assembly, we shall still say—what of it? Experience is the best teacher and it will show who is right. Let the peasants solve this problem from one end and we shall solve it from the other. Experience will oblige us to draw together in the general stream of revolutionary creative work, in the elaboration of new state forms. We must be guided by experience; we must allow complete freedom to the creative faculties of the masses. The old government, which was overthrown by armed uprising, wanted to settle the land problem with the help of the old, unchanged tsarist bureaucracy. But instead of solving the problem, the bureaucracy only fought the peasants. The peasants have learned something during the eight months of our revolution; they want to settle all land problems themselves. We are therefore opposed to all amendments to this draft law. We want no details in it, for we are writing a decree, not a programme of action. Russia is vast, and local conditions vary. We trust that the peasants themselves will be able to solve the problem correctly, properly, better than we could do it. Whether they do it in our spirit or in the spirit of the Socialist-Revolutionary programme is not the point. The point is that the peasants should be firmly assured that there are no more landowners in the countryside, that they themselves must decide all questions, and that they themselves must arrange their own lives.

(Loud applause)

Lenin, Vol. 26, pp. 257-261.



## FORMATION AND COMPOSITION OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT

October 26 (November 28) 1917

*The official announcement of the formation of the new government, adopted at the second meeting of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, October 26, 1917, not only listed the new government officers but established a radically new nomenclature: People's Commissars*

*and Council of People's Commissars. Commissar itself was a term which had come into wide use in 1917 for special officials of the new revolutionary authorities, especially of the soviets. Council (Soviet) was a traditional term, used by the tsarist Council (Soviet) of Ministers. The main novelty was in attaching the terms "People's" before Commissar. The origin of the name remains uncertain: Trotsky claimed that he invented it in conversation with Lenin. The Council of People's Commissars is often referred to as Sovnarkom, from the first syllable of the three words in Russian, and sometimes as the CPC.*

#### DECISION TO FORM THE WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' GOVERNMENT

The All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies resolves:

To establish a provisional workers' and peasants' government, to be known as the Council of People's Commissars, to govern the country until the Constituent Assembly is convened. The management of individual branches of state activity is entrusted to commissions whose members shall ensure the fulfilment of the programme announced by the Congress, and shall work in close contact with mass organisations of men and women workers, sailors, soldiers, peasants and office employees. Governmental authority is vested in a collegium of the chairmen of those commissions, i.e., the Council of People's Commissars.

Control over the activities of the People's Commissars with the right to replace them is vested in the All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies and its Central Executive Committee.

At the present time the Council of People's Commissars is constituted as follows:

Chairman of the Council—Vladimir Ulyanov (Lenin);

People's Commissar of the Interior—A.I. Rykov;

Agriculture—V.P. Milyutin;

Labour—A.G. Shlyapnikov;

Army and Navy Affairs—a committee consisting of: V.A. Ovseyenko (Antonov),

N.V. Krylenko and P.Y. Dybenko;

Commerce and Industry—V.P. Nogin;

Education—A.V. Lunacharsky;

Finance—I.I. Skvortsov (Stepanov);

Foreign Affairs—L.D. Bronstein (Trotsky);

Justice—G.I. Oppokov (Lomov);

Food—I.A. Teodorovich;

Posts and Telegraph—N.P. Avilov (Glebov);

Chairman for Nationalities Affairs—J.V. Jugashvili (Stalin).

The office of People's Commissar of Railways is temporarily vacant.

Lenin, Vol. 26, pp. 262-263.



#### CENSORSHIP OF THE PRESS

October 27 (November 9) 1917

*The first law issued by the new Council of People's Commissars was a decree instituting and justifying censorship of the press (some papers already had been closed). The decree touched sensitive nerves among revolutionaries who had long struggled against such restrictions on freedom of expression. It provoked stormy controversy within the Bolshevik Party and also*

*between the Bolsheviks and potential allies such as the Left SRs over what weapons the government could legitimately use to combat its critics and enemies. It marks the beginning of press control in Soviet Russia.*

#### DECREE ON THE PRESS

In the serious decisive hour of the revolution and the days immediately following it the Provisional Revolutionary Committee was compelled to adopt a whole series of measures against the counter-revolutionary press of all shades.

Immediately on all sides cries arose that the new socialistic authority was violating in this way the essential principles of its program by an attempt against the freedom of the press.

The Workers' and Soldiers' Government draws the attention of the population to the fact that in our country behind this liberal shield there is actually hidden the liberty for the richer class to seize into their hands the lion's share of the whole press and by this means to poison the minds and bring confusion into the consciousness of the masses.

Everyone knows that the bourgeois press is one of the most powerful weapons of the bourgeoisie. Especially in this critical moment when the new authority, that of the workers and peasants, is in process of consolidation, it is impossible to leave this weapon in the hands of the enemy at a time when it is not less dangerous than bombs and machine guns. This is why temporary and extraordinary measures have been adopted for the purpose of cutting off the stream of mire and calumny in which the yellow and green press would be glad to drown the young victory of the people.

As soon as the new order is consolidated, all administrative measures against the press will be suspended; full liberty will be given it within the limits of responsibility before the laws, in accordance with the broadest and most progressive regulations in this respect.

Bearing in mind, however, the fact that any restrictions of the freedom of the press, even in critical moments, are admissible only within the bounds of necessity, the Council of People's Commissars decrees as follows:

General rules on the press:

1. The following organs of the press shall be subject to be closed: (a) Those inciting to open resistance or disobedience towards the Workers' and Peasants' Government; (b) those sowing confusion by means of an obviously calumnious perversion of facts; (c) those inciting to acts of a criminal character punishable by the penal laws.

2. The temporary or permanent closing of any organ of the press shall be carried out only by a resolution of the Council of People's Commissars.

3. The present decree is of a temporary nature and will be revoked by special decree when the normal conditions of public life are reestablished.

Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars  
Vladimir Ulianov (Lenin)

Meisel and Kozera, pp. 23-24, with minor changes by the editor.



#### THE SPREAD OF THE REVOLUTION: SARATOV

October 27 (November 9) 1917

*Adherence to the Bolshevik Revolution by city soviets across Russia was the key to the initial spread of the revolution. In many places local Bolsheviks, usually already in control of the city soviet, were able to carry out a local revolution with little or no bloodshed. Saratov is an example*

*of such. There the Bolsheviks already had a majority in the soviet before October 25. They moved quickly to support the revolution in Petrograd, and the evening of October 26 the soviet shouted approval of a motion to transfer power to the hands of the soviet in Saratov. This was followed quickly, during the early morning hours of the 27th, by the meeting of the soviet's executive committee given below. At this meeting the Bolshevik leaders began practical steps to secure power. It is worth noting that the Saratov Soviet issued its own land decree and discussed censorship of the press, even though they could not have known of the decree in Petrograd later that same day on the latter subject. For an example of the failure of local Bolsheviks to establish Soviet power quickly, see below, November 2, Kharkov.*

In the meeting during the night on October 27 [actually during the early morning hours, about 4:00 a.m. October 27] the Executive Committee distributed work among its members. [It decided] to choose an executive bureau with the right of the Executive Committee... [names follow].

Comrade Lebedev proposes to remove the Provincial Commissar, Topuridze, from his duties and to name our own.

Comrade Antonov proposes immediately to name comrade Lebedev, and moreover that it is necessary to remove the district (uezd) commissars, sending our own in their place.

The Executive Committee resolved: to remove the commissar of the Provisional Government, Diomid Topuridze, from his duties; to name as provincial commissar of Soviet power comrade Petr Lebedev; to issue an order about removal of district commissars and to send our own commissars. In the city of Volsk is named comrade Kukushkin, and in Petrovsk-Ganzhinskii; to send comrade Sergeev to Atkarsk and Rtishchevo, giving him the right of naming commissars locally. Candidacy for other districts remains open for now.

Comrade Antonov—It is necessary immediately to take the telegraph and telephone stations before they are seized by our opponents. Loss of communications means unnecessary bloodshed.

The Executive Committee resolved: immediately to take by armed force the telephone and telegraph stations, and as commissar [for them] to send Stepniak.

Comrade Antonov would draw attention to the fact that tomorrow newspapers and proclamations will come out with furious attacks against the Soviet, and it is necessary to send an order to editors at once about the inadmissibility of anti-Soviet articles and appeals, on pain of severe personal and property punishment; to order owners of printing houses, under the same threat, not to print any anti-Soviet works. Moreover, it is necessary immediately to send comrades to check on the typesetting.

The Executive Committee resolved: to issue a decree to all bourgeois papers not to carry articles with attacks on the Soviet. To send comrade Alekseev to check the typesetting.

Comrade Antonov, drawing attention to the fact that the Paris Commune suffered defeat among other reasons because it was not able to feed the people, [and to the fact] that the supply council, being in the hands of parties hostile to us, can be in their hands an extremely dangerous weapon, proposes immediately to introduce into the board of the council our own people from the Soviet's supply section.

Comrade Vasil'ev points to the necessity of such action, since the supply people could quit work and cause us serious troubles.

The Executive Committee resolves: to introduce into the board of the supply council representatives from the Soviet's supply section.

Comrade Antonov read a draft decree on the land which he had worked out and proposes, having discussed it quickly, to print it up: it is necessary to transfer land to the peasants as quickly as possible and thus bind them to the workers' revolution.

The Executive Committee, having heard the draft decree on the land, resolved: to publish the decree about the immediate transfer of landlord, crown and monastery land to peasant committees.

## DECREE ON THE LAND

In the name of saving the revolution, in the name of protecting the national patrimony from wild pogroms and plunder, in the name of the inalienable right of the peasant to all land, in the name of bread for the workers, the exhausted and hungry army, and the rest of the population, the Executive Committee of the Saratov Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies has decreed:

1. All landlord, monastery, church and crown lands must immediately be registered and placed at the disposal of peasant land committees or other peasant democratic organizations.

2. All bread and fodder reserves on seized estates cannot be sold to private individuals. Responsibility for their preservation lies with the aforementioned committees or organizations, which are responsible to the Soviet.

3. Livestock, such as horses, cattle, goats, sheep, etc., may be used to the extent needed by the peasantry, but in each case with the permission of the committees or organizations, which are responsible to the Soviet for their safety. Breeding stock may not be used for labor.

4. Machinery inventory (plows, harvesting and winnowing machines, etc.) can be used for work; at the completion of work it is turned over in good condition for safekeeping, under the supervision of the committees and organizations.

5. Country estates, houses and palaces, with all their furnishing, libraries, paintings, etc., are taken over with diligent records and carefully preserved. Responsibility lies with the committees and organizations, which are accountable to the Soviet.

6. Committees are obligated to organize security and not to allow, by plunder, arson and pogroms, the destruction of estates and property placed at their disposal.

7. Committees must immediately furnish the Soviet with a list of moveable and immoveable property seized and registered as at their disposal.

8. Arguments and disagreements between committees and organizations of different groups are to be resolved between them; if they cannot reach agreement then the issue is transferred to the Soviet, whose decision is binding until resolution by the Constituent Assembly.

9. Having received and carried out this decree, the peasant committees are obligated to inform the Soviet immediately about any quantity of bread they can place at the disposal of the Soviet for the sustenance of the workers, army and city population.

[The Executive Committee resolved] to publish a decree to the population:

The tragic condition of the country compelled the Petrograd workers and soldiers to remove the Provisional Government of Kerensky and Konovalov from power. Power in Petrograd was transferred into the hands of the Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies. The Saratov Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies orders: 1. All employees of government and public institutions are to remain at their posts and to subordinate themselves without question to the instructions of the Saratov Soviet and its organs. 2. Units of the local garrison are to be at military preparedness and to subordinate themselves only to those orders which come from the presidium of the military section. 3. Workers are not to cease work without the call of the Soviet. Factory committees are to take into their own hands supervision of the regular flow of life in the factories. 4. The population must maintain complete calm. Any attempts at pogroms or agitation will be mercilessly suppressed by armed force. The Soviet will take the most decisive measures in combatting individual robbers. 5. All who call for insubordination to the Soviet, for pogroms, etc., are to be arrested and sent to the military section of the Soviet. 6. Preparations for the election to the Constituent Assembly are to continue as before.

*Triumfal'noe shествie Sovetskoi vlasti. Chast' I* (Moscow, 1963), pp. 376-378.

## ON POPULAR EDUCATION

October 29 (November 11) 1917

*Faith in education and in "enlightenment" of the people was a long-standing characteristic of Russian revolutionaries, and the importance of education to the building of the future socialist state was to be a core belief of the new government. These beliefs were affirmed during the first week, while the very survival of the new regime and its exact political coloration were still in doubt, by the new People's Commissar of Enlightenment, V. I. Lunacharsky. Although conditions were to make immediate implementation of these ideals difficult and the next decade was to see vigorous debate about educational theory and practice, achieving general literacy and major improvement in the overall level of education were to be permanent aims of the new government. A declaration such as this one at this difficult time was therefore appropriate and symbolic. The Russian term for this commissariat, proshveshenie, is commonly translated as either "enlightenment" or "education"; the former is used here as more reflective of both the term and the intent of the commissariat.*

## ON POPULAR EDUCATION

Citizens of Russia!

By the insurrection of October 25th the toiling masses have won real power for the first time.

The All-Russian Congress of Soviets has temporarily transferred this power to its Executive Committee and to the Council of People's Commissars. I have been appointed People's Commissar for Education by the will of the revolutionary people.

The general direction of the people's education, in so far as it remains with the central Government, is entrusted until the Constituent Assembly meets to the State Commission on the people's education, of which the People's Commissar is Chairman and Executive.

On what fundamental propositions will this State Commission be based? What determines its sphere of competence?

*The General Line of Educational Activity*

Every truly democratic power in a country where illiteracy and ignorance abound must, in the sphere of education, make its first aim the struggle against this darkness; it must achieve universal knowledge of reading and writing in the shortest possible time by organising a network of schools which meet the requirements of modern pedagogics, by introducing universal, obligatory and free instruction and at the same time by setting up a series of teachers' institutes and seminaries which will furnish in the quickest possible time the mighty army of people's teachers which is required for the instruction of the whole population of the boundless Russian land.

But no genuine democracy can remain satisfied with mere knowledge of reading and writing, with universal elementary instruction; it must strive for the organisation of variously graded absolutely secular schools *for all citizens*.

Our ideal is: equal and highest possible education for all citizens. So long as this is not realisable for all, the natural transition from grade to grade at school and up to the University, the transfer to a higher stage must depend exclusively on the ability of the scholar and be entirely independent of the degree of well-being of his family.

The problem of a genuinely democratic organisation of instruction is particularly difficult to accomplish in a country impoverished by a long criminal imperialist war. But the working people who have seized power cannot possibly leave out of consideration the fact that knowledge will serve them as the mightiest weapon in their struggle for a better lot and for intellectual growth. However much the other sections of the national budget may have to be cut down—the cost of public education must be high: a high budget for educational

purposes is the pride and glory of every nation. The free peoples of Russia will not forget this now they are in power.

The struggle against illiteracy and ignorance cannot be limited to the establishment of a regular system of school instruction for children and young persons. Adults, too, are anxious to be delivered from the low estate of persons who are unable to read or write. Schools for adults must occupy a large place in the plan of popular instruction.

### *Instruction and Education*

The difference between instruction and education must be emphasised. Instruction is the imparting of knowledge in a completed form to the pupil. Education is a creative process. An individual's personality goes on being "educated" all through his life, all through his life it goes on expanding, goes on being enriched, growing stronger and more complete.

The toiling masses, the workers, the soldiers and the peasants are thirsting for elementary instruction and various kinds of knowledge. But they also long for education. This no one can give them, neither the State nor the intelligentsia nor any power outside themselves. Schools, books, theatres, museums etc. can only assist them. The masses will obtain their culture themselves consciously or unconsciously. They have their own ideas created by their social environment which differs so greatly from the environment which up to now has created the culture of the ruling classes; their own ideas, their own perceptions, their own approach to all personal and social problems. The city worker according to his own fashion, the rural labourer according to his, will each form his clear world-conception permeated by the class consciousness of the workers.

There is no more sublime and beautiful vision than that of which the coming generations will be both the witnesses and the participants: the building up by collective labour of their own communal, rich and free life of the spirit. Teaching is here an important, but not a decisive factor. The criticism and the creative force of the masses is of greater consequence for it is only in some of their aspects that art and science have a universal human meaning; they suffer substantial variations with every far reaching class upheaval.

Everywhere in Russia, in particular among the town workers but also among the peasants, a powerful wave of a cultural educational movement is gathering force; workers' and soldiers' organisations of this kind are rapidly multiplying; to go to meet it, to support it in every way, to clear the road in front of it, this is the first task of a revolutionary people's government in the sphere of popular education.

### *Decentralisation*

The State Commission on People's Education is in no sense a central power governing the teaching and educational institutions. On the contrary the entire school system must be transferred to the organs of local self government. Full autonomy must be given to the independent work of the workers, soldiers and peasants establishing educational class organisations on their own initiative; full autonomy, that is to say, must be given by both the State centre and the municipal centres.

The function of the State Commission must be to act as a link and helpmate and to organise material, ideological and moral support on a national scale for the municipal and private educational institutions, and in particular for those of a class character established by the workers.

### *The State Committee for People's Education*

A whole series of valuable law projects has been worked out by the State Committee for People's Education, since the beginning of the revolution, a truly democratic body as to its composition and rich in experienced specialists. The State Commission sincerely desires the collaboration of this Committee in its planning. It is addressing itself to the bureau of this Committee with the request for an extraordinary session of the Committee to be convened for the carrying out of the following program:



(1) Revision of the rules of representation in the Committee in the sense of its still further democratisation.

(2) Revision of the Committee's powers in the sense of their extension and of converting it into a principal State institute for the elaboration of law projects for the complete reorganisation of public instruction and education in Russia on a democratic basis.

(3) The revision, jointly with the new State Commission, of the draft laws already completed by the Committee, this revision being required by the fact that in drawing them up the Committee had to take into account the bourgeois outlook of previous ministries which circumscribed its action even in this narrowed form. After this revision the draft laws will be put into effect in the revolutionary manner without any bureaucratic red tape.

### *The Teacher in Society*

The State Commission welcomes the pedagogues to the noble and honourable work of educating the people—the masters of the country. No single measure in the sphere of people's education should be taken by any authority without paying careful attention to the opinion of the representatives of the teaching world.

On the other hand decisions cannot by any means be arrived at exclusively through a body of specialists. This refers also to the reform of the institutions of general education.

The co-operation of the pedagogues with the social forces—this is what the Commission by virtue of its composition will aim at within the State Committee as well as in its general activity.

The Commission considers the improvement of the status of the teachers as its very first task, and above all the disinherited, but perhaps most important cultural workers—the elementary school teachers. Their just demands must be satisfied without delay and under any circumstances. The proletariat of the schools has in vain been demanding an increase of salary to 100 roubles a month. It would be disgrace to leave the teachers of the overwhelming majority of the Russian children in poverty.

### *The Constituent Assembly*

The Constituent Assembly will soon begin its work. It alone can permanently lay down order of national social life in our country and at the same time the general nature of the organisation of popular education.

Now, however, with the transference of power to the Soviets the truly democratic character of the Constituent Assembly is assured. The line followed by the State Commission relying on the State Committee will not be materially altered by the Constituent Assembly. Without predetermining it the new People's Government considers itself within its rights in carrying out a series of measures in this sphere which aim at enriching and enlightening the spiritual life of the country as rapidly as possible.

### *The Ministry*

The present work must proceed provisionally through the Ministry of People's Education. The State Commission elected by the Soviets and the State Committee will decide upon all the necessary changes in its composition and construction. The final ordering of governmental authority in the sphere of people's education will, of course, be established by the Constituent Assembly. Until then the Ministry must fulfil the role of leading organ for the State Commission for People's Education and for the State Committee.

The country's salvation lies in the co-operation of its truly democratic forces.

We trust that the united efforts of the working people and the honest enlightened intelligentsia will lead the country out of its painful crisis and through complete democracy into the realm of socialism and the brotherhood of nations.

DECREE ON THE EIGHT-HOUR WORKDAY AND THE  
DURATION AND DIVISION OF WORKING TIME

October 29 (November 11) 1917

*The eight-hour day and other conditions of labor were key issues of the revolution. Industrial workers demanded institution of the 8-hour day immediately after the February Revolution, and forced its adoption in many cases. The Provisional Government worked on these questions, but never completed development of new regulations. After seizing power the Bolshevik government quickly promulgated several new laws affirming the social and economic as well as political gains of the year of revolution.*

1. This law applies to all establishments and industries irrespective of their size or to whom they belong, and to all persons employed in hired labor.

2. The working time, or the number of working hours in a day, is considered to be the time during which, according to the contract of employment (Articles 48, 60, 96, 98, and 103 of the Industrial Labor Law), the workman is obliged to be in the industrial establishment at the disposal of its superintendent for the performance of the work.

Note 1. In underground work the time taken by the descent into the mine and ascent to the surface is considered working time.

Note 2. The working time of workmen sent to perform any kind of labor beyond the boundaries of an establishment is determined by special agreement with the workmen.

3. The working time fixed by the rules governing the internal organization of the establishment (Clause I, Article 103 of the Industrial Labor Law) must not exceed eight working hours in a day and forty-eight hours in a week, including therein also the time employed in cleaning the engine and in putting the premises in order.

On Christmas eve (December 24) and on the Pentecost holiday (Whitsunday) work is stopped at 11 o'clock in the morning.

4. Not later than six hours after the commencement of work a free interval for rest and eating must be designated. The interval must not be shorter than one hour.

Free recesses during work are those which are fixed by the rules of the internal organization; during such recesses the workman is free to dispose of his time and to leave the boundaries of the establishment.

During the free recesses in working time the engines, lathes, and benches must be stopped; exceptions from this rule are allowed only for those over-time works which are performed in accordance with Articles 18-22 of this law, as well as for engines and motors which are working for ventilation, water supply, lighting, etc.; moreover, work may not be stopped in those manufactories in which stoppage is impossible for technical reasons (such as unfinished casting or unfinished polishing).

Note 1. Establishments whose work is recognized by law or by the main chamber of labor as continuous and which is performed in three shifts a day, do not observe the rules regarding recesses, but are obliged to give the workman the right to take food during his work.

Note 2. If a workman, owing to the conditions of his work, can not absent himself from the place of work to take food, then a room or place is to be provided for him for that purpose. The setting aside of a special room for the above purpose is obligatory for those workmen who, when working, come in contact with materials recognized by the rulings of the main board of factory and mining industries (or the organ taking its place) as injurious to the health of the workmen (lead, mercury, etc.).

5. The general duration of all recesses during twenty-four hours shall not exceed two hours.

6. Night time is considered the time between 9 o'clock in the evening and 6 o'clock in the morning.

7. In the night time it is forbidden to utilize the labor of workers of the female sex, or of workers of the male sex under sixteen years of age.

8. For enterprises working two shifts of workmen, the night time is considered from 9 o'clock in the evening until 5 o'clock in the morning, while the free recesses (Article 4) may be reduced to half an hour for each shift.

9. In those cases where, by request of the workers (for instance, in brick works) or on account of climatic conditions, it is desired to make the midday recess more lengthy, the main board of factory and mining industries (or the organ taking its place) may permit a corresponding departure from the rules in Articles 4, 5, 6 and 8 of this statute.

10. When hiring minors under eighteen years of age the following rules in addition to the above are applied: (a) minors under fourteen years are not permitted to work for hire; (b) the working time of minors under eighteen may not be longer than six hours a day.

Note: Beginning January 1, 1919, all persons who have not reached fifteen years are not permitted to work for hire, and beginning January 1, 1920, those who have not reached twenty years of age.

11. In the table of holidays on which work is stopped (Clause 2, Article 103 of Industrial Labor Law) are included all Sundays and the following holidays: January 1, January 6, February 27, March 25, May 1, August 15, September 14, December 25 and 26, Friday and Saturday of Passion week, Monday and Tuesday of Easter week, Ascension Day, and the second day of Pentecost.

Note 1. For non-Christians it is permitted to include other holidays instead of Sundays, according to the precepts of their religion; of the remaining holidays mentioned in this article only those are obligatory for them which are not indicated in the following note.

Note 2. By the consent of the majority of workmen of an establishment or industry, or a part of them, the holidays of January 1 and 6, August 15, September 14, December 26, Saturday of Passion week and Easter Monday may be replaced by other free days.

12. In one-shift day work the least duration of the Sunday and holiday rest given each workman is fixed at forty-two hours. In two-shift work with two complements of workmen, and in three-shift work with three complements of workmen, and in three-shift work with three complements of workmen, the least duration of a Sunday and holiday rest for each workman is fixed by agreement with the workmen's organizations.

13. By mutual agreement of the superintendent of the establishment or industry with the people employed by it, the latter may, as a departure from the rules about holidays indicated in Article 11, be engaged in work on a holiday instead of on a weekday. Such an understanding must immediately be reported to the proper officials who look after the execution of this law.

14. The main board of factory and mining industries (or the organ taking its place) is given the right to issue regulations permitting, to the extent of real necessity, departures from the rules set forth in Articles 3, 4, 5 and 8 for those establishments which, by the nature of their production for the satisfaction of public needs, must perform the work in the night time or must work irregularly at different seasons of the year (for instance, work for lighting and water supply of cities).

15. In manufactories and works in which the workmen are subjected to the operation of particularly unfavorable conditions, or to dangers of occupational poisoning (such as work in an extraordinarily high temperature, in mercury and bleaching factories, etc.), the working time indicated in Articles 3-5 and 8 is subject to further reduction. A list of such works and manufactories, with the indication of the duration of the working time permissible in each line of work, as well as other conditions of the work, is to be compiled by the main board of factory and mining industries (or the organ which takes its place).

16. Women and youths of either sex under eighteen years of age are not permitted to work underground.

17. A departure from the rules stated in Articles 3-5 and 8-12 is permitted by agreement with the workmen and with the approval of the workmen's organizations with regard to workmen engaged in auxiliary work, such as repairs, care of boilers, motors, lathes, factory heating, water supply, lighting of the factory buildings, guard and fire duty, and in general such work without whose preliminary performance the industrial enterprise can not be put in operation at the fixed time and which must of necessity be performed after the stoppage of the work.

18. The work which is performed by the workman at a time when, according to the tables of working time, he is not supposed to work is considered over-time. Over-time work is permitted only when conditions stated in Articles 19-23 of this statute are observed and when it is paid for at a double rate.

19. All persons of the female sex, and persons of the male sex who have not reached eighteen years of age, are not permitted to work over-time.

20. Workmen of the male sex older than eighteen years may work over-time with the permission of the workmen's organization only in the following cases: (a) when over-time work is necessary in order to finish in time the work begun, which because of unforeseen and accidental delay could not by the mechanical conditions of production be finished in the normal working time (according to the rules of the establishment), and when the stoppage of that work at the set time might cause danger or injury to materials and the mechanism (work with chemical processes, casting, etc., may be considered of that nature); (b) for the performance of work necessary to avert danger to life or property, or for the removal of accidental causes which have disturbed the technical conditions necessary for the regular water supply, lighting, sanitation, and urgent public communication; (c) when working on necessary repairs in case of sudden injury to boilers, motors, lathes, and, in general, unforeseen derangement of mechanisms, apparatus, or structures (buildings, dams, etc.) which cause the stoppage of the work of the entire establishment or any of its branches; (d) when performing temporary work in any branch of the establishment in cases where because of fire, break-down, or unforeseen circumstances, the work of one or other branch of the establishment was stopped for some time or entirely and when this work is necessary for the full operation of the other branches of the establishment.

21. In such a case as is mentioned in the last paragraph of Article 20 it is necessary to obtain from the commissar of labor or labor inspector a special permit for over-time work; and in the application for such permit the daily duration of such work and the time during which it will be performed must be indicated. About over-time work specified in Clauses b and c of Article 20, ordinary notice is given.

22. All over-time work is recorded in the workmen's account books by special entry, with an indication of the pay due for it; in addition, a special over-time account has to be kept in the office books for each workman separately.

23. Over-time work under conditions stated in Articles 19-22 is allowed on not more than fifty days in a year for each separate establishment, and each day of over-time work in a branch is counted even if on that day only one workman did over-time work in that branch.

24. The duration of over-time work of each individual workman must in no case exceed four hours for two days in succession.

25. For some time, until the end of military operations, in the establishments working for defense, the rules limiting the duration of over-time work (Articles 19-24) and those about recesses during the work (Articles 4-6) may be suspended by agreement with the workmen and the workmen's organizations.

26. This law is to be put into operation by telegraph and becomes effective immediately. For its violation offenders are liable to imprisonment for a period not longer than one year.

*The Nation*, December 28, 1918, pp. 825-826.

## THE VIKZHEL APPEAL FOR A BROAD SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT

October 29 (November 11) 1917

*One of the key issues after the October Revolution was the party composition of the new government: purely Bolshevik, as Lenin desired and the new government reflected, or a broader socialist coalition, as many—including some Bolsheviks—desired. Vikzhel, the All-Russian Executive Committee of the Union of Railway Workers, dominated by moderate socialists, attempted to use its control of vital transport and communication lines to force the various socialist parties to lay aside their differences and form a broad-based socialist government. Vikzhel apparently also warned Kerensky, who was still mustering troops for an attack on Petrograd, that they would use their control of railroads against him if fighting continued. This call stimulated several days of intense political debates.*

To All Railroad Unions; Soviets of Soldiers', Workers', and Peasants' Deputies; Moscow Vikzhel; Petrograd Sovnarkom; Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies; Tsentroflot; Tsentrobalt; Central Committees of Political Parties; Central Committee of Postal-Telegraph Unions; Central Council of All-Russian Trade Unions; Military Revolutionary Committees; All Army Organizations and Committees;

To All, All, All!

The country is without an organized government, and a bitter struggle for power is in progress. Each of the contending parties is trying to create a government by means of force, and [as a result] brother is killing brother. At the very time when the foreign foe threatens the freedom of the people, the democracy settles internal quarrels with blood and iron. The Provisional Government with Kerensky at its head has proved itself too weak to retain the reins of power. The government of the Soviet of People's Commissars, formed at Petrograd by one party only, cannot expect to be recognized or supported by the country as a whole. It is, therefore, necessary to form a government that will have the confidence of the democracy as a whole and have enough prestige to retain the power until the meeting of the Constituent Assembly. Such a government can be formed only by common consent of the democracy but never by force. Civil war never has and never can create a government that has the backing of the whole country. A people that is opposed to the death penalty as a means of justice, and is rejecting war as a method of settling international disputes, cannot accept civil war as a means to end internal quarrels. Every civil war leads straight to counter-revolution and is advantageous only to the enemy of the people. In order to guard the liberty of the country and to save the revolution, the Central Committee of the All-Russian Union of Railwaymen has, from the very beginning of this civil strife, assumed a strictly neutral attitude and has declared that the only way to obtain internal peace is by forming a homogeneous ministry, made up of the Socialist parties, from the Bolsheviks to the Socialists-Populists inclusive. Our stand has been accepted and approved by many public organizations and parties in Petrograd and Moscow. The Central Executive Committee [of the Railwaymen's Union] has repeatedly declared and declares once more that it will place the whole railway service at the disposal of those who accept its platform. The Central Executive Committee makes clear its determined position to all citizens, workers, soldiers, and peasants and categorically demands that the civil war be ended and that homogeneous revolutionary-socialist government be formed. The Railwaymen's Union gives notice that it will make use of every means at its disposal, even to complete stoppage of all train movements, to carry out its decision. Train service will be suspended at midnight today, October 29-30, if by that time the fighting in Petrograd and Moscow has not ceased. All railwaymen's organizations are to take the necessary steps to strike and to appoint strike committees. The Railwaymen's Union denounces as enemies of democracy and as traitors to the country all those who continue to settle internal quarrels by means of force.

Malitsky  
Chairman of the Central Executive Committee  
of the All-Russian Railwaymen's Union

Bunyan and Fisher, pp. 155-156. See Permissions page.



THE BOLSHEVIK CENTRAL COMMITTEE REJECTS  
A BROAD-BASED SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT

November 2 (15) 1917

*The Vikzhel demand for a broad socialist government (see above) and the intense negotiations among political groups which followed struck a responsive chord among many Bolshevik leaders, some of whom had long favored a more broadly based government. The Central Committee debated the issue on October 29, apparently in the absence of Lenin and Trotsky, and agreed to further discussion. On November 1 the Central Committee heard another report on the Vikzhel discussions, and an angry Lenin attacked the very idea of continuing the talks. By November 2 Lenin and Trotsky had managed to defeat those Bolsheviks favoring continued compromise, in which they probably were helped by the failure of Kerensky's military efforts to retake the city, thus lessening the immediate threat to the regime. The Central Committee meeting that day passed this resolution, written by Lenin, which firmly reasserted his principle of a Bolshevik government and rejected compromise, especially with those socialists who had walked out the Congress of Soviets. Moreover, its rough attack on those Bolsheviks (especially Kamenev) who had represented the party at the earlier discussions about a coalition socialist government was not only a good example of Lenin's polemical style, but also set the ground for a split in the party leadership which took place a few days later. A variation of the document, without the first three points, was published at the time in Pravda; the full resolution, including the attack on members of the Central Committee, was published much later.*

RESOLUTION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B)  
ON THE OPPOSITION WITHIN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

The Central Committee considers that the present meeting is of historic importance and that it is therefore necessary to record the two positions which have been revealed here.

1. The Central Committee considers that the opposition formed within the Central Committee has departed completely from all the fundamental positions of Bolshevism and of the proletarian class struggle in general by reiterating the utterly un-Marxist talk of the impossibility of a socialist revolution in Russia and of the necessity of yielding to the ultimatums and threats of resignation on the part of the obvious minority in the Soviet organisation, thus thwarting the will and the decision of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets and sabotaging the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry which has been inaugurated.

2. The Central Committee lays the whole responsibility for hindering revolutionary work and for the vacillations, so criminal at the present moment, on this opposition, and invites them to transfer their discussion and their scepticism to the press and to withdraw from the practical work they do not believe in. For this opposition reflects nothing but intimidation by the bourgeoisie and the sentiments of the exhausted (not the revolutionary) section of the population.

3. The Central Committee affirms that the purely Bolshevik government cannot be renounced without betraying the slogan of Soviet power, since the majority at the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, without excluding anybody from the Congress, entrusted power, to this government.

4. The Central Committee affirms that, without betraying the slogan of the power of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, there can be no entering into petty bargaining over the affiliation to the Soviets of organisations of a non-Soviet type, i.e., organisations which are not voluntary associations of the revolutionary vanguard of the people who are fighting for the overthrow of the landowners and capitalists.

5. The Central Committee affirms that to yield to the ultimatums and threats of the minority of the Soviets would be tantamount to complete renunciation not only of Soviet power but of democracy, for such yielding would be tantamount to the majority's fear to make use of its majority, it would be tantamount to submitting to anarchy and inviting the repetition of ultimatums on the part of any minority.

6. The Central Committee affirms that, not having excluded anybody from the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, it is even now fully prepared to permit the return of those who walked out and to agree to a coalition within the Soviets with those who walked out, and that, consequently, all talk about the Bolsheviks refusing to share power with anybody is absolutely false.

7. The Central Committee affirms that on the day the present government was formed, a few hours before its formation, the Central Committee invited three representatives of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries to attend its meeting and formally proposed that they should join the government. The refusal of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, although it was provisional and conditional, places on these Left Socialist-Revolutionaries the entire responsibility for the fact that an agreement with them as not reached.

8. The Central Committee recalls that a resolution, proposed by the Bolshevik group, was adopted by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets expressing readiness to reinforce the Soviet both by soldiers from the trenches and by peasants from the localities, from the villages, and that therefore the assertion that the Bolshevik government is opposed to a coalition with the peasants is absolutely false. On the contrary, the Central Committee declares that the land law of our government, which was wholly copied from the Socialist-Revolutionary Mandate, is practical proof of the complete and most sincere readiness of the Bolsheviks to effect a coalition with the vast majority of Russia's population.

9. The Central Committee affirms, finally, that despite all difficulties, the victory of socialism both in Russia and in Europe can only be ensured by the unswerving continuation of the present government's policy. The Central Committee expresses its firm belief in the victory of this socialist revolution and calls upon all sceptics and waverers to abandon their waverings and whole-heartedly and with supreme energy support the actions of this government.

Lenin, Vol. 26, pp. 277-279.



## DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLES OF RUSSIA

November 2 (15) 1917

*Equality of all nationalities within the Russian state had been generally accepted by liberals and socialists throughout 1917. The right of self-determination, and especially of autonomy*

*or independence, was more controversial. In this decree of the Council of People's Commissars the Bolsheviks took the extreme position, allowing even for secession, at least in theory. This brought, as intended, some support for the Bolsheviks from various nationality groups, or at least helped prevent their support for the Whites during the Civil War. It also brought serious problems in applying it to specific cases, and required reinterpretation as the new government battled national independence movements, as various documents which follow demonstrate.*

#### DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLES OF RUSSIA

The October revolution of the workers and peasants began under the common banner of emancipation.

The peasants are being emancipated from the power of the landowners, for there is no longer the landowner's property right in the land—it has been abolished. The soldiers and sailors are being emancipated from the power of autocratic generals, for generals will henceforth be elective and subject to recall. The workers are being emancipated from the whims and arbitrary will of the capitalists, for henceforth there will be established the control of the workers over mills and factories. Everything living and capable of life is being emancipated from the hateful shackles.

There remain only the peoples of Russia, who have suffered and are suffering oppression and arbitrariness, and whose emancipation must immediately be begun, whose liberation must be effected resolutely and definitely.

During the period of tsarism the peoples of Russia were systematically incited against one another. The results of such a policy are known: massacres and pogroms on the one hand, slavery of peoples on the other.

There can be and there must be no return to this disgraceful policy of instigation. Henceforth the policy of a voluntary and honest union of the peoples of Russia must be substituted.

In the period of imperialism, after the February revolution, when the power was transferred to the hands of the Kadet bourgeoisie, the naked policy of instigation gave way to one of cowardly distrust of the peoples of Russia, to a policy of fault-finding and provocation, of "freedom" and "equality" of peoples. The results of such a policy are known: the growth of national enmity, the impairment of mutual trust.

An end must be put to this unworthy policy of falsehood and distrust, of fault-finding and provocation. Henceforth it must be replaced by an open and honest policy which leads to complete mutual trust of the people of Russia. Only as the result of such a trust can there be formed an honest and lasting union of the peoples of Russia. Only as the result of such a union can the workers and peasants of the peoples of Russia be cemented into one revolutionary force able to resist all attempts on the part of the imperialist-annexationist bourgeoisie.

Starting with these assumptions, the first Congress of Soviets, in June of this year, proclaimed the right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination.

The second Congress of Soviets, in October of this year, reaffirmed this inalienable right of the peoples of Russia more decisively and definitely. Carrying out the will of these Congresses, the Council of People's Commissars resolves to base its actions concerning the nationality question in Russia on the following principles:

1. The equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia.
2. The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, even to the point of separation and the formation of an independent state.
3. The abolition of any and all national and national-religious privileges and disabilities.
4. The free development of national minorities and ethnic groups inhabiting the territory of Russia.

The concrete decrees that follow from these principles will be immediately elaborated after the setting up of a Commission on Nationality Affairs.



In the name of Russian Republic,

Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, V. Ulianov (Lenin)  
 People's Commissar on Nationality Affairs, Iosev Dzhugashvili (Stalin).

Meisel and Kozera, pp. 25-26, with modification by the editor.



## THE SPREAD OF THE REVOLUTION DELAYED: KHARKOV

November 2 (15) 1917

*Adherence to the Bolshevik Revolution by city soviets across Russia was the key to the spread of the revolution. The process varied, however, with many carrying out a local establishment of "Soviet power" within a few days (see October 27, above) while others delayed. Kharkov is an example of the latter. There a coalition of left socialist parties which controlled the Soviet set up a Military Revolutionary Committee as the government for the city and effectively refused to accept either Lenin's or any other government for the time being. A special role was played in this by Ukrainian parties. This account from the Kharkov Bolshevik newspaper suggests the political complexity found in many cities, acknowledges the Bolshevik failure to seize power locally, and looks ahead to the struggle for power in Kharkov. Bolshevik and "Soviet" control was established only on December 10. Phrases in brackets are clarifications added by the editor-translator.*

In Kharkov events passed quite bloodlessly. A Military Revolutionary Committee was formed the morning of October 26. A Bolshevik proposal to make it an organ of the Soviet alone was rejected, and instead the Committee was composed of representatives of various revolutionary-democratic organizations. The Committee elected an Executive Bureau of nine members (two Bolsheviks, two Left SRs, one Menshevik-Internationalist, two Ukrainian Social Democrats, two Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionaries).

The morning of October 26 steps were taken against the possibility of action by the six armored cars which had recently come to Kharkov and whose attitude toward events was not certain. By the afternoon it was clear that they would subordinate themselves to the direction of the Revolutionary Committee. The same day the old commissar [of the Provisional Government] was removed and the transfer of power into the hands of the Committee was announced.

From October 27 the counter-revolutionaries began to organize in Kharkov, headed by former commissars on the one hand and by defensist Mensheviks and SRs on the other. A Committee for the Salvation of the Revolution was formed, which began to circulate appeals calling for support for Kerensky and telegrams with provocative rumors.

The Military Revolutionary Committee, whose mood was compromiser in the main, did not take any measures against the staff of the counter-revolution, and finally even entered into contact and negotiations with it.

From the morning of October 30 rumors emerged about action against Kharkov by the Chuguev military cadets. Two delegates from the Executive Bureau were sent to Chuguev, who did not return by evening, having been arrested by the cadets. On October 31 a second delegation was sent to Chuguev with representatives from the city дума with the demand immediately to free those arrested.

At this time, when in almost all other cities power had passed already into the hands of the Soviet, in line with the decree of the Congress [of Soviets] of October 26, in Kharkov,

where counter-revolution was quite weak, such a transfer did not take place. This happened because of the predominance in the Soviet of Mensheviks and SRs who were calling themselves internationalists. The Soviet meeting of October 30 rejected the Bolshevik resolution which proposed to subordinate the "revolutionary *deviatka*" [the "nine," the Executive Bureau], to the Soviet, and adopted the SR-Menshevik-Ukrainian resolution which demanded a broad but entirely socialist government [in Petrograd] and unconditionally recognized the "revolutionary *deviatka*" as the actual government [in Kharkov].

The immediate task of the Kharkov workers is to bring Kharkov into line with the rest of Russia.

*Donetskii proletarii*, No. 1, November 2, 1917.



CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DEBATE ON CENSORSHIP, ON ITS  
RELATIONSHIP TO THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS, AND THE  
RESIGNATION OF SEVERAL BOLSHEVIK LEADERS

November 4 (17) 1917

*The restrictions on the press (see Decree on the Press, October 27) evoked strong objections from members of the Central Executive Committee, especially from the Left SRs but also some Bolsheviks. As revolutionaries who had suffered under Tsarist press censorships, restricting freedom of expression was a bitter pill to swallow, a rejection of all they had fought for. Others charged the Bolsheviks with instituting a system of political terror. Therefore, the Left SRs introduced a resolution repealing the press decree and prohibiting all acts of political repression without authorization from a tribunal appointed by the CEC. The proponents of censorship, however, justified it on various grounds, ranging from immediate threats to the regime (Trotsky) to more ideological arguments about weakening "capitalists" and the creation of a new order (Avanesov, Lenin, others). The debate was important not only for the immediate issue, but because it was an early posing of the question of how open the new regime would be to conflicting viewpoints and how ready to resort to repressive measures against opposing ideas as well as physical opposition. The debate also brought to the surface the question of the relationship between the CEC and the CPC, as well as the ongoing issue of government composition and the tensions between the Bolsheviks and Left SRs. Moreover, it revealed disagreements among the Bolsheviks and led several important Bolsheviks to resign their government positions at the end of the meeting. The initial paragraph, concerned with mandates, is omitted, as is item 2, the reading of telegrams from abroad (p. 33, below).*

FIFTH SESSION OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

*1. Freedom of the Press and Responsible Government*

LARIN: At the present moment, on the eve of the elections to the Constituent Assembly, the situation in regard to the press needs to be improved. The measures taken against press [freedom] could be justified during the actual course of the struggle [for power], but not now. The press should be free so long as it does not incite subversion or insurrection. Censorship of every kind must be completely eliminated. No repressive measures should be taken except by a special tribunal, whose competence should extend to all kinds of political repression, arrests etc. The new government cannot afford to issue any more orders like the ignorant one signed by Muravyev.

I propose the following resolution:

The CEC ordains:

1. Lenin's press decree is revoked.
2. No acts of political repression may be carried out except by authorization of a special tribunal, chosen by the CEC in proportion to the strength of each fraction. The tribunal has the right to repeal all acts of repression that have already occurred.

AVANESOV: I propose that discussion of this issue be postponed until a decision has been reached on composition of the government.

MALKIN: The question of press freedom must be examined in the context of the general political situation, considered even more broadly than Larin suggests. We must examine the question of [the powers of] the CPC, which is issuing one decree after another without any sanction by the CEC.

KALEGAYEV: In my view the question of press freedom should be taken separately from that of an agreement [with the socialists on composition of the government], since for a socialist there can be no doubt as to how he should act [on the matter of press freedom].

SHREYDER agrees.

KAMKOV: Either we recognize freedom only in words, or else we are behaving hypocritically. When Bolshevik newspapers were closed down [under previous regimes] we expressed our indignation along with our Bolshevik comrades. No one has yet called for the overthrow of the existing regime, yet press freedom is being infringed without due cause. We are [morally] obliged to rescind these repressive measures, which bring shame on the Russian revolution. I propose that they be so rescinded forthwith.

Avanesov's motion is rejected. By [a majority of] 22 votes it is decided to consider the question of the press together with that of repressive acts in general.

AVANESOV: The question of press freedom must be seen in the context of the current political situation in the country as a whole. It seems that no one objects to closure of bourgeois newspapers during an insurrection, when fighting is in progress. If this is so, [we must ask ourselves] whether the struggle is indeed over and the moment has come when we can pass on to a normal mode of life. Having silenced the bourgeois press, [the revolutionary authorities] would be very naïve if they were to let slip from their hands such a powerful means of influencing the ideals of all workers, soldiers, and peasants. All these measures are designed to facilitate the creation of a new regime, free from capitalist oppression, in which a socialist press will ensure freedom of speech for all citizens and for all tendencies of thought.

We defend freedom of the press [in principle], but this concept must be divorced from old petty-bourgeois or bourgeois notions of liberty. If the new government has had the strength to abolish private landed property, thereby infringing the rights of the landlords, it would be ridiculous for Soviet power to stand up for antiquated notions about liberty of the press. First the newspapers must be freed from capitalist oppression, just as we have freed the land from the landlords, and then we can promulgate new socialist laws and norms enshrining a liberty that will serve the whole toiling people, and not just capital.

I move the following resolution:

The closure of bourgeois newspapers was not motivated simply by military considerations during the period of insurrection and suppression of attempted counter-revolution, but was an essential transitional measure in establishing a new press regime in which public opinion will not be fabricated autocratically by the capitalists who own the newsprint and printing-presses.

The next measure should be to confiscate private printing-presses and stocks of newsprint, and to transfer their ownership to [organs of] Soviet power in the centre and in the provinces, so that parties and groups may have the technical means to publish [newspapers] in proportion to the number of their adherents.

The restoration of so-called 'freedom of the press', i.e. the return of printing-presses and newsprint to the capitalists, poisoners of the people's consciousness, would be an impermissible capitulation to the will of capital, a surrender of one of

the most important strongpoints of the workers' and peasants' revolution, and thus indubitably counter-revolutionary. Accordingly the CEC repudiates categorically any proposals leading to a restoration of the old regime in press matters and supports the CPC unconditionally against pretensions and intrigues dictated either by petty-bourgeois prejudices or by outright servility to the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

KALEGAYEV: The way this question has been posed shows that there is a profound disagreement between our position and that of the Bolsheviks. [The latter argue:] previously we defended all civil liberties, but now we are prepared to muzzle our opponents. However, one cannot emancipate society from the fetters of capitalism by taking repressive measures against newspapers. Nor is it possible to carve up freedom of the press like a loaf of bread, allocating so much freedom to each group according to the influence exerted by its ideas. When the Bolsheviks talk of poisoning the people's consciousness by the printed word, they are adopting the viewpoint of [the editors of] *Zemshchina*.

TROTSKY: One should distinguish between the situation during a civil war and the situation once victory is complete. To demand that all repressive measures should be abandoned during a civil war is equivalent to demanding that the war itself should cease. Such a demand could come only from adversaries of the proletariat. Our opponents are not offering us peace. No one can provide a guarantee against [a victory of] the Kornilovites. During a civil war it is legitimate to suppress newspapers that support the other side. But when we are finally victorious our attitude toward the press will be analogous to that on freedom of trade. Then we shall naturally move on to a [regular] regime in press matters. In our party press we have for a long time been accustomed to take a non-proprietary view of press freedom. Measures taken against [suspect] individuals should also be taken against press organs. We should confiscate and socialize printing-presses and stocks of newsprint... (*Shouts from the floor: 'And Bolshevik ones too?'*). Yes, all these stocks should be transferred to public ownership. Any group of [workers] soldiers, or peasants will be able to submit an application for [access to supplies of] newsprint and to a printing-press.

We say that *Novoye vremya*, which has no electoral support, should not have a single piece of printer's type or a single sheet of paper. Nor should *Russkaya volya*, so long as it remains simply an organ of the banks, have any right to exist. Such measures should not be continued indefinitely, but neither can we return to the capitalist way of doing things. The transfer of power to the soviets is a transition from bourgeois rule to a socialist system. How was Suvorin able to publish a paper on such a grandiose scale? Only because he had money. Can we permit him and his like to pour out their poison during the Constituent Assembly elections? Such a paper would be bought by only a minuscule section of the population. In general, can one imagine that newspapers should [be allowed to] exist which depend upon the banks rather than upon the people? All the press media should be handed over to Soviet power. You say that [before the revolution] we demanded freedom of the press on behalf of *Pravda*. But then we were living under conditions which were apposite to our programme-minimum; now we are putting forward the demands in our programme-maximum. (*Applause by soldiers in the audience.*) I see the soldiers are with me. (*Left SR cries: 'Demagogy!' 'Cirque Moderne!'*) I used the same language to the crowds there as I am using now; it is not I who speak with a forked tongue. When you return—the soldiers to the trenches, the peasants to the villages—you will say that there are two points of view on this question: either freedom for the bourgeois press or confiscation of paper and printing-presses for transfer to the hand of the workers and peasants.

KARELIN: It is a Hottentot morality which holds that it's bad if someone steals my wife but good if I steal someone else's. I say this because Trotsky has been critical of our party. It is surprising that we should hear [such arguments] from a party which itself now enjoys freedom of the press. We cannot have double standards of morality.

But I would rather discuss this question in terms of political expediency. Is it expedient to muzzle the expression of any trend of opinion? History teaches that whenever this is done it only makes such opinions more attractive. Forbidden fruit is sweet. I agree with

Trotsky that we have to eliminate capitalist oppression in regard to the press. But the measures [he proposes] are risky. One can attain this objective without muzzling opinion, simply by undertaking a wide range of protective actions in the distribution of material. The [Bolshevik] resolution proposes that parties and groups should have [the right to publish] newspapers in proportion to the number of their supporters, but such calculations will scarcely be practicable. It would be absurd to distribute [opportunities to publish] in proportion to [the strength of various currents of] opinion; this would be like socializing thought itself.

I should make it clear that in advocating freedom of opinion we do not seek to extend it to the weakest sector [in terms of popular support]. Trotsky alleges that we are arguing from the standpoint of capital. I say that whoever puts the question in such terms is arguing from the standpoint of his own [ministerial portfolio]. Genuine representatives of the people should not be afraid of minority opinions. Such fear betrays an awareness that one's own opinions are weak. 'Who wants press freedom?', Trotsky asks. The answer is: everyone who cherishes the [revolutionary] movement of our people. We think this movement will suffer if we continue to apply the sanctions which at the start we accepted as justified. Moreover, the honour of this movement requires that an end be put to civil war.

LENIN: Karelin assures us that the road on which he stands leads to socialism. But to take this road would be to advance toward socialism hindsides first. Trotsky was right: 'freedom of the press' was the slogan under which the cadets mutinied and fighting began in Petrograd and Moscow. This time the SRs are not acting either as socialists or as revolutionaries. [Early] this week the entire telegraph network was in Kerensky's hands. Vikzhel was also on the [Provisional Government's] side. But they did not have the army with them. As it turned out, the army was for us. The civil war, begun by a minuscule group, is not yet over. The Kaledinites are marching on Moscow and the shock battalions on Petrograd. We do not want civil war. Our forces have been very patient. They waited and refrained from shooting. The shock troops fired first, killing three of our men. Krasnov was treated mildly, merely being placed under house arrest. We are opposed to civil war. But if it continues none the less what are we to do? Trotsky was right to pose the question: for whom are you speaking? We asked Krasnov whether he would sign a statement on Kaledin's behalf promising that the latter would stop fighting. But not surprisingly he replied that he could not do so. If the enemy is still in the field, how can we be expected to lay down our arms? When they propose peace terms we shall negotiate. But at present the peace offers are coming from persons on whom the decision does not depend, so they are nothing but fair words. After all *Rech'* is an organ of Kaledinites. We recognize the [Left] SRs' sincerity, but behind them stand Kaledin and Milyukov.

Soldiers! The firmer you stand the more we shall achieve. On the other hand, [if you are soft, our enemies] will say that we are still unsure of ourselves, [pointing to the fact that] we let Milyukov go. We stated earlier that if we took power we would close down bourgeois newspapers. To allow them to exist is to cease to be socialists. Whoever says 'let the bourgeois newspapers publish' fails to understand that we are moving full steam ahead toward socialism. After all tsarist newspapers were closed down when tsarism was overthrown. Now we have cast off the bourgeois yoke. It was not we who thought up the social[ist] revolution—it was proclaimed by the delegates to the Congress of Soviets—and no one there protested at the decree proclaiming it. The bourgeoisie proclaimed liberty, equality, and fraternity, [but] the workers say: 'this is not what we want.'

We are accused of retreating, but it is the [Left] SRs, not we, who are going back to Kerensky. It is said that our resolution contains something new. Yes, of course we are introducing something new, for we are moving on towards socialism. When the SRs spoke out in the First and Second Dumas they too were mocked for saying something new.

Private advertisements must be declared a [state] monopoly. The members of the printers' union [who object to this] are looking at the question purely in bread-and-butter terms. We shall satisfy their [material] desires, but in a different way. We cannot give the bourgeoisie

any [opportunity] to slander us. We must at once set up a commission to investigate the connections between the bourgeois newspapers and the banks and to ascertain what sort of 'freedom' these papers enjoyed. It is not freedom to buy up quantities of newsprint and to hire a mass of scribblers. Before [anyone may] start up a newspaper, we shall insist that he prove his independence of the banks. One can hold elections to find out the strength of each party and allocate the technical resources according to the number of votes cast. This will prevent capitalists alone enjoying freedom of the press and flooding the villages with their cheap newspapers. We must get away from the notion that a press dependent on capital can be free. This is an important question of principle. If we are moving towards social[ist] revolution, we cannot reply to Kaledin's bombs with bombs of falsehood. There are of course inadequacies in our draft decree, but it will be implemented by the soviets [flexibly], according to local conditions. We are not bureaucrats and do not want to apply the letter of the law everywhere, like the officials of old. I remember how the SRs used to say that the village is terribly ignorant, that they [the villagers] draw their information from *Russkoye slovo*. It is our fault for leaving the newspapers in bourgeois hands. We have to go forward to the new society and deal with the bourgeois papers in the same way as we dealt with the Black Hundred ones in February-March.

MALKIN: Lenin has no business to allege that we are going to socialism hindsides first. Least of all should the charge be levelled by the man who once wanted to advance to socialism by offering his famous 'cutoffs', but who has now wholly accepted our agrarian programme of land socializations.

When this resolution was introduced, we thought that the repressive dictatorship offered us was a result of the panic that seized the Bolshevik maximalists when they found themselves isolated at the moment of their victory. But now Trotsky and Lenin have sought to give this dictatorship an ideological foundation. We firmly repudiate the notion that socialism can be introduced by armed force. In our view socialism is a struggle not merely for material advantages but for supreme human [moral] values. The revolution's appeal lies in the fact that we are striving not just to fill our hungry bellies but for a higher truth, the liberation of the individual. We shall win not by closing down bourgeois newspapers but because our programme and tactics express the interests of the broad toiling masses, because we can build up a solid coalition of soldiers, workers, and peasants.

Lenin has told us about slanders put out by the bourgeois press and about Chernov. So what? Has not the truth about Chernov now asserted itself and given the lie to the slanders of the yellow press? We revolutionaries and socialists replied to these lies by telling the truth. The lies of the bourgeois press do not represent an authentic danger to the socialist movement. The toiling masses have a reliable compass to guide them: the support of overwhelming numbers of people, who will sooner or later win over the remaining, more backward strata of democracy. To be good leaders [we] must first be good politicians, good socialists; at the same time the [mass] movement [itself] is implementing the noble ideals of the labouring people, the bulk of mankind, who are advancing towards socialism.

We Socialist-Revolutionaries were once prisoners of tsarism but we were never its slaves, and we don't want to establish slavery for anyone now. We remind the Marxists present that you cannot establish new social relations by decree; they have to be developed gradually, in the process of struggling for socialism. When whole sectors of the nation's economic life are being socialized, when they are being taken over by co-operatives and municipal institutions, one need not fear the bourgeois press. Just let it try to influence the masses: they won't listen! 'The arm of criticism, not criticism by arms': this should be the watchword in the free Russian Republic. Those who feel that defeat is round the corner can scarcely win. You are applying the tactics of the vanquished, not of the victors, for the triumphant proletariat should show magnanimity not only toward its enemies on the battlefield but toward all political opponents, whatever class they belong to. You are dishonouring the socialist movement by depriving it of its moral force.

We propose that the CEC immediately repeal all limitations on press freedom. In vain does Trotsky, referring to the soldiers' applause, tell us that they will not follow us [in such a course]. They applauded him because they are drunk with victory and have lost their reason. At such a moment your tactics may succeed; but once they have sobered up ours will triumph.

A motion to curtail debate is passed. Two resolutions are tabled: Larin's, which fails by 31 votes to 22, and the Bolshevik one, which is passed by 34 votes to 24 with 1 abstention. RYAZANOV, explaining his motives for voting against the Bolshevik resolution: I am the representative of [the All-Russian Central Council of] Trade Unions. I cannot vote for any limitation on press freedom since I believe that even the Anarchists should have the right to express their views.

At the request of SPIRO a half-hour recess is declared.

Chairman: Gillerson

PROSHYAN, for the Left SRs: This question is one of acute importance for our fraction. The struggle for press freedom has always been closely bound up with the struggle for socialism. The revolution cannot take a step backward on this matter, covering itself by [offering minority groups] access to technical facilities but in practice prohibiting [them from exercising these rights]. The resolution that has been passed legalizes repression and clearly shows that the Bolshevik members of the CEC are embarking upon a path of terror. This tactic is ruinous for the class struggle and ruinous for the revolution.

Our party has charged me to make the following declaration:

The resolution on the press just passed by the majority of the CEC is a clear and unambiguous expression [of support for a] system of political terror and for unleashing civil war. The SR fraction, while remaining in the CEC, the legitimate [central deliberative] organ of revolutionary democracy, in order to defend the interests of the workers and peasants whom it represents, has no desire to bear any responsibility for this system of terror, ruinous for the revolution, and therefore withdraws all its representatives from the Military-Revolutionary Committee, the staff, and all responsible posts.

NOGIN, given the floor for an urgent statement on behalf of a group of people's commissars, reads the following declaration:

We take the stand that it is vital to form a socialist government from all parties [represented in] the soviets. Only such a government can seal the heroic struggle of the working class and revolutionary army in the October-November days. We consider that a purely Bolshevik government has no choice but to maintain itself by political terror. This is the course on which the CPC has embarked. We cannot follow this course, which will lead to the proletarian mass organizations becoming estranged from those who direct our political affairs, to the establishment of an irresponsible government, and to the annihilation of the revolution [and] the country. We cannot bear responsibility for such a policy and therefore, in the presence of the CEC, resign from our posts as people's commissars.

(signed) V. Nogin, PC of Trade and Industry  
A. Rykov, PC of Internal Affairs  
V. Milyutin, PC of Agriculture  
[I.] Teodorovich, PC of Supply

[The following] adhere to this statement:

D. Ryazanov

N. Derbyshev, commissar of press affairs

I. Arbuzov, commissar of the State Printing Works

[K.] Yurenev, commissar of Red guards

G. Fedorov, head of the labour conflict department  
(chairman of the workers' section) in the ministry of Labour  
Citizen Yu. Larin, commissar, head of department of legislative proposals.

[Addendum:] While adhering to the general appraisal given above of the political situation in regard to the need for an agreement, I consider it impermissible to lay down my responsibilities.

(signed) A. Shlyapnikov, PC of Labour

An unidentified LEFT SR then reads the following statement:

To the Chairman of the CEC:

The Left SR fraction proposes that the CEC should address the following urgent interpellation to the Chairman of the CPC, Ulyanov-Lenin:

At the Second Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies it was laid down that the CEC is the supreme organ to which the government is wholly responsible. However, in the last few days the government has published a number of decrees which have not been discussed or approved by the CEC. By this procedure the government has taken measures which have *de facto* annulled fundamental civil liberties. We therefore ask the chairman of the CPC:

1. On what grounds were drafts of [these] decrees and other measures not submitted for examination to the CEC?

2. Does the government now intend to desist from the arbitrary and completely impermissible practice it has established of ruling by decree?

(signed) V. Karelin, V. Spiro, A. Shreyder, V. Alexandrovich-Dmitriyevsky, I. V. Balashev, Peter Bukhartsev, A. Proshyan, S. Zak, Gr. Zaks.

[After an interruption to read telegrams of support from abroad, the meeting continued—Ed.]

### 3. *Interpellation on Arbitrary Rule*

LENIN, replying to the interpellation: Let me remind you that in the first days of the revolution the Bolsheviks invited the Left SRs to join the new government, but that they declined because they did not want to share responsibility with their neighbours to the left during these difficult critical days. In order to exercise control over the government's policy, it is quite sufficient for the CEC to have the right to remove ministers. The new government could not have coped with all the obstacles which stood in its path if it had observed all [legal] formalities. The moment was too serious to brook any delay. We could not afford to lose time smoothing over asperities, for this would only have affected the external trimmings and not the essence of the new measures.

After all, the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, too, cast aside all formal considerations when, in a single great session, it adopted two laws of world-wide significance. Let us admit that these laws may suffer from formal defects, considered from the standpoint of bourgeois society: the main thing is that power is in the hands of the soviets, which can correct them as may be required. The criminal inactivity of the Kerensky government led the country and the revolution to the verge of ruin; its delaying policy nearly proved fatal. The new government, by passing laws which meet the aspirations of the broad popular masses, is staking out landmarks along the road to a new way of life. The local soviets may adapt the basic decrees passed by the government, expanding and supplementing them according to their own particular needs. Mass creativity is the fundamental factor in the new society. Let the workers set about establishing workers' control in their factories; let them supply the villages with manufactures in exchange for grain. Not a single product, not a single pound of grain should be left unaccounted for, since socialism is above all else a matter of accounting. Socialism is not created by direction from above. Its spirit is totally alien to that



of routine obedience as found in the barracks or in the bureaucracy. Socialism is something vital, the creation of the people themselves.

MIRSKY: I move that for the rest of this session the debate be private.

PROSHYAN: I object. We do not and cannot have any secrets from the people. Our electors ought to know what their chosen representatives are doing.

Motion rejected unanimously.

KALEGAYEV, replying to Lenin for the Left SRs: The fact that the Left SRs are not in the government is one question, the legality of that government's actions is another. The Soviet government ought to keep to the rules laid down by the Second Congress of Soviets. The practice of determining laws in secret and decreeing them autocratically can lead only to the most unfortunate misunderstandings. When decrees are being turned out one after another like fresh loaves from the bakers', contradictions [are bound to] arise which will cause confusion in the provinces. The new laws are not only deficient from an external, formal point of view: they are also mutually contradictory in spirit. For example, the land decree abolished private property in land in perpetuity, but the decree on land committees, which was published shortly afterwards, said nothing about this. This leads to muddle and argument. When these ordinances reach the provinces and come to be interpreted by simple-minded people there will be discord and conflict.

Moreover, however urgent the situation may be the CPC has no right to infringe the rules laid down by the Congress and to act contrarily to their spirit as well as their letter. The government ought to have requested the Congress to give it power to modify the Congress's dispositions. If it failed to do so, it is [acting illegally, just as it is] acting illegally by ignoring the will of the CEC.

A motion to curtail debate is defeated.

PROSHYAN: When I was working in Finland, before coming to Petrograd, I was very much in favour of our party joining the government. But now that I have seen how things are here I have changed my mind. We are being asked to go back to the old way of doing things: in place of one irresponsible government which led us to the verge of ruin we are being offered another irresponsible government which will finish off the revolution for good. Let us forget about the formal objections. The point is not that the government has broken the law or that it should have to respond to interpellations, but that in the very centre of revolutionary democracy there is disorder, caused by a divorce between the executive authorities on one hand and the central representative organ on the other—the CEC, which does duty for the Congress of Soviets. The Military-Revolutionary Committee is frequently out of touch with the revolutionary staff, the CPC with the Commander-in-Chief, and so on. These lapses and errors can only be of advantage to enemies of the revolution.

It is not because we are addicted to the letter of the law that we insist on the government rendering account of its actions to the CEC. For only if these two organs are in concord can one expect the government to remain loyal to the spirit of the decisions taken by the Congress of Soviets. We have before us the example of the previous coalition regimes. They managed to avoid their formal responsibility to account for their conduct before the CEC, and by doing so they in fact broke the vital link between themselves and the people. This was their basic mistake, the source of their weakness. We warn the new government not to follow blindly along the same path. We do so because we want the new people's government to rest on a solid foundation.

KARELIN: I protest at the abuse of the term 'bourgeois'. It is not only bourgeois governments which need to give account of themselves or to maintain good order in their affairs, even in matters of detail. Don't let's try to cover up mistakes by pinning an unpopular label [on critics]. A proletarian government must also submit to popular control. After all, when a firm is taken over by its workers, they cannot manage it properly without keeping and presenting accounts.

Our demand for responsible government is being rejected on the simple grounds that this was characteristic of earlier parliamentary regimes. The logical corollary would be to abandon financial accountability as well, as another 'bourgeois' prejudice. Our demand for control [over the government by the CEC] does not stem from any party-political egoism but is a requirement imposed by life itself.

These decrees and draft ordinances which are being cooked up like *bliny* are extraordinarily illiterate, although as yet, thank heavens, literacy has not been declared a bourgeois prejudice. This defect will make for a lot of trouble, especially in the countryside, where people are used to interpreting orders from on high literally, and clashes may even occur there. Thus the government's excessive display of activity, instead of helping the country, will cause it irremediable harm.

LEVIN: The soviet which I represent fought hard against the irresponsibility of the previous coalition cabinets. Unfortunately the same light-hearted attitude towards their obligations is being adopted by our present-day Bolshevik leaders, who seem not to realize how serious this matter is.

MALKIN: The reason why we did not join the government was very different from the reason for the resignation of some members of the CPC. We reject the path of experimentation on which the new government has embarked. We want our group, which comprises a significant minority in the CEC, to be able to make its weight felt in the legislative process. Not a single people's commissar has addressed a session of the CEC in an official capacity until today, when some of them announced their resignation. Their departure from the government threatens it with a catastrophic collapse. What steps does Lenin propose to take to avert such an eventuality? He should make his views known on this question, which is of such urgency to us all.

TROTSKY: In Kerensky's day neither the right nor the left wings of the Socialist-Revolutionary party pressed the old CEC to render account of itself. Our Soviet parliament differs from others in that it does not contain representatives of antagonistic classes. Our government is one of the toiling oppressed classes and so has no place for conventional parliamentary machinery. Procedural rules usually just serve to balance off against each other the opposing class forces represented in the assembly, and to prevent deputies from being influenced by their electors. For when a deputy is asked to do something by the mass [of electors] who voted for him, he can easily reply that he cannot grant their request because of the limitations of parliamentary procedure. But in our system things are different. Our deputies do not need to shield themselves behind formal excuses of this sort. They are linked to their electors by the same kind of bond as exists in a trade union—a bond that is vital and immediate. It is true that we don't have formal guarantees [against abuses of executive power], but in lieu of that our deputies enjoy real controlling authority, for at any moment they may recall the people's commissars. Soviet power is not the result of backstage manoeuvres by party leaders, like a French government, for example. Our power expresses the actual will of the organized masses. It may be true that our decrees have some rough edges, but they express a vital creativity that is more important than formal perfection.

Our legislative activity is already yielding results. It has evoked a response throughout Russia and even abroad. The land decree was so well attuned to popular aspirations that it would have been wrong to delay its promulgation by a single day, even if this would have allowed us to improve the wording.

Let those who are tired, who are few in numbers but of high [intellectual] quality, go their own way: we shall continue our march forward without them, holding our heads high. A previous speaker said that the government is facing collapse. It is not collapsing but purging itself. We who remain in it think it would be wrong to make the slightest concession to the bourgeoisie or to the groups of intellectuals who stand in the middle and advocate compromise. If you disagree with us you may recall us, but we shall never voluntarily betray our [revolutionary] line.

LENIN: I shall deal with the concrete charges levelled against the CPC. So far as Muravyev's order is concerned, we only learned of it from the newspapers, since in an emergency the Commander-in-Chief has the right to issue orders on his own authority. This order contained nothing contrary to the spirit of the new government, but it was phrased in such a way that undesirable misunderstandings could have resulted, and therefore the CPC has annulled it.

You also criticized the land decree, although it meets the people's demands. As for the charge of schematism, where are your own drafts, amendments, and resolutions? Where is the fruit of your creative thinking? You are free to put forward laws yourselves, but we don't see any. You call us extremists, but you are nothing other than apologists for parliamentary obstruction, for what used to be called chicanery. If you are dissatisfied, call a new Congress [of Soviets] and act instead of sitting back and talking about a collapse of the government. Power rests with our party, which enjoys the broad masses' confidence. It is true that some of our comrades have taken a stand that has nothing in common with Bolshevism, but the Moscow workers will not follow Rykov or Nogin.

Proshyan said that in Finland, where the Left SRs were in close contact with the masses, they thought it essential for all left-wing revolutionary socialists to unite. If the Left SRs here [in Petrograd] do not join us, this simply shows that they have become divorced from the people, like their defensist predecessors.

RYAZANOV: Let me point out that the CEC delegates who took part in the talks with [representatives of] the other socialist parties acted in complete solidarity with the Bolshevik CC.

TROTSKY: The Bolshevik CC is not trying to arrogate all power to itself. We offered power to the Second Congress of Soviets, which included some defensist delegates. It is not our fault that they walked out and refused to go along with the majority. We responded to Vikzhel's invitation [to attend the conference], but we cannot afford to sacrifice the new government's programme for the sake of a shadowy agreement [with the democratic socialists].

SPIRO, for the Left SRs, tables the following motion:

The CEC, having heard the explanations offered by the chairman of the CPC, considers them unsatisfactory.

URITSKY tables a resolution expressing confidence in the CPC:

The CEC states, in regard to the interpellation that has been presented, that:

1. The Soviet parliament of the working masses can have nothing in common, so far as its procedure is concerned, with a bourgeois parliament, where different classes with antagonistic interests are represented, and where deputies of the ruling class turn procedural rules into a weapon of legislative obstruction;

2. The Soviet parliament cannot refuse the CPC the right to issue, without preliminary discussion by the CEC, urgent decrees within the limits of the general programme adopted by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets;

3. The CEC exercises a general control over the entire activity of the CPC and may replace the government or individual members thereof;

4. The CEC regrets that the Left SRs, who presented the interpellation, have not found it possible to participate directly in the government, and thus in the elaboration of all urgent decrees.

The Left SR resolution is rejected by 25 votes to 20. A discussion follows on whether people's commissars should be allowed to vote. LENIN and TROTSKY point out that at party congresses leaders could do so and that they are bound by party discipline; for this reason they intend to take part in the vote. Uritsky's resolution is taken as the basic text by 25 votes to 23 and then, on a roll-call vote, by 29 votes to 23 with 2 abstentions. Subsequently it is voted on clause by clause. Clause I is passed without amendment. KALEGAYEV proposes that clauses 2 and 3 be omitted, but this is defeated, in the first instance by 27 votes to 14 [and in the second instance by an unspecified number of votes]. AVANESOV proposes omission of clause 4, but this likewise is rejected. Finally the resolution is approved as a whole.

#### 4. *Resignation of the People's Commissars*

ZAKS: This step is a sign that their [the resigning commissars'] former comrades in the CPC have set course for a socialist revolution. But if we burn our bridges will we not be entirely isolated? After all, we have won precious little support so far. Western Europe is shamefully silent. One can't build socialism by decree and by relying solely upon a single party.

LENIN: The phrase 'the west is shamefully silent' is impermissible from the lips of an internationalist. One would have to be blind not to notice the ferment that has gripped the working masses in Germany and the west [in general]. The leaders of the German proletariat, the socialist intelligentsia, consist in the main of defensists, as they do everywhere else, but their proletarian followers are prepared to desert them and to respond to our call. The savage discipline that prevails in the German army and navy have not prevented elements opposed [to the war] from taking action. The revolutionary sailors in the German navy, knowing that their enterprise was doomed to fail, went to meet their fate heroically, in the hope that their sacrifice would awaken the spirit of insurrection among the people. The Spartakus group is spreading its revolutionary propaganda with ever greater intensity. The name of Liebknecht, that tireless fighter for the ideals of the proletariat, is daily becoming more popular in Germany.

We believe in a revolution in the west. We know that this is inevitable, but of course we can't bring it about to order. Did we know last December what was to happen in February? Did we know for sure in September that the next month Russian revolutionary democracy would bring off the greatest overturn in world [history]? We knew that the old government was sitting on a volcano and we could guess from many signs that beneath the surface a great change was occurring in people's ideas. We could feel the electricity in the air, we knew that it would inevitably discharge itself in a purifying storm. But we could not predict the day and hour when the storm would break. It is exactly the same now in the case of Germany. There too the people's sullen discontent is growing and is bound to erupt in the form of a broad mass movement. We cannot decree the revolution but we can at least help it along. We shall organize fraternization in the trenches and help the western peoples to launch the invincible socialist revolution.

Zaks talks about [not] decreeing revolution. But isn't our government calling upon the masses themselves to create a better way of life? The exchange of industrial products for grain and the introduction of [workers'] control and accounting are the beginning of socialism. Yes, we shall indeed establish a republic of labour in which whoever does not work shall not eat.

It is said that our party is isolated, but is this really so? A few individual intellectuals have split away, but with every day that passes we are winning more and more support among the peasants. Only those will conquer and retain power who believe in the people and plunge into the source of popular vitality and creativity.

I move the following resolution:

The CEC directs the CPC to present at the next session candidates for the posts of PC of Internal Affairs and PC of Trade and Industry, and proposes that Kaleyayev assume the post of PC of Agriculture.

PROSHYAN: I again remind the CEC that the Left SR fraction has decided to withdraw its representatives from all Soviet organs.

MALKIN: Our fraction could accept this proposal only if a homogeneous socialist government were formed, the press decree annulled, and the policy of repression abandoned, so that the [inter-party] talks may be brought to a successful conclusion—as the CEC has resolved they should be.

TROTSKY: The Left SR fraction wants the CPC to approve a coalition with Avksentyev and co. [i.e. the Right SRs] and freedom for the press to serve finance capital. But we cannot allow the Left SRs to join the government with [a programme] so hostile to the people. They must [make up their minds:] either to go with Avksentyev or to go with us; there is no alternative.

MALKIN: Trotsky is putting the question in the form of an ultimatum and so discrediting the CEC's decision, taken yesterday, to continue talks with Gots, Avksentyev, and the rest. TROTSKY: It is not the individuals as such that we detest, or the groups to which they belong, but rather the tactics they employ. If [the moderate socialists] want to join the soviets we shall be pleased, but we cannot afford to deprive the country of its government while talks are going on—with our consent, incidentally—with the sort of people who incited the cadets [to rise] against Soviet power. If you don't go along with us, just for the sake of the shadow of an agreement, then you are nobodies, mere shadows of Gots and Dan, who are themselves just shadows of the bourgeoisie.

Lenin's resolution obtains 30 votes. The SRs refuse to take part in the vote. They also reject the proposal that Kalegayev assume the post of PC of Agriculture.

Keep, pp. 68-89. The symbols and notes employed by Keep to indicate the various sources used to assemble this account and the variations in the sources are not included here. See Permissions page.



## PROCLAMATION OF THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

November 7 (20) 1917

*Ukrainian nationalists pressed the Provisional Government in 1917 for autonomy, with power partially vested in a Ukrainian Central Rada (Council). The Bolshevik Revolution further loosened the bonds between the Russian state and nationality regions such as the Ukraine. The Central Rada soon asserted itself, issuing the Third Universal (proclamation), proclaiming the Rada and its executive, the General Secretariat, the government of a Ukrainian People's Republic. It stopped short of complete independence, however, calling for a federal state on the territory of the former Russian Empire. The Rada was socialist as well as nationalist, and the Universal included sweeping land and other reforms. This act brought the Rada into conflict with the Soviet authorities. This government is called variously in English the Ukrainian People's Republic, the Ukrainian National Republic, and the Ukrainian Democratic Republic, deriving from different ways of translating the Ukrainian word Narodna in the government's title. See also January 9, 1918.*

Ukrainian people and all peoples of the Ukraine!

A heavy and difficult hour has fallen upon the land of the Russian Republic. In the capitals to the north a bloody civil struggle is raging; the Central Government has collapsed, and anarchy, lawlessness and ruin are spreading throughout the state.

Our land is also in danger. Without a single, strong national authority, the Ukraine may also fall into the abyss of civil war, slaughter and ruin.

Ukrainian people! You, together with the other fraternal peoples of the Ukraine, have placed us to guard the rights acquired through your struggles, [empowered us] to create order and to build new life on our land; and, we, the Ukrainain Central Rada, by your will, and in the name of establishing order in our country in the name of saving all of Russia, do now proclaim:

From this day forth, the Ukraine becomes the Ukrainian People's Republic.

Without separating ourselves from the Russian Republic and maintaining its unity, we shall stand firmly on our own soil, in order that our strength may aid all of Russia, so that the whole Russian Republic may become a federation of equal and free peoples.

Until [the convocation of] the Constituent Assembly of the Ukraine, all power to establish order in our country, to promulgate laws, and to govern belongs to us, the Ukrainian Central Rada, and to our government—the General Secretariat of the Ukraine.

With power and authority in our native land, we shall use this power and authority to stand guard over freedom and the revolution, not only in our land, but also throughout all of Russia.

Therefore, we proclaim:

To the territory of the Ukrainian People's Republic belong regions inhabited for the most part by Ukrainians: the provinces of Kiev, Podillia, Volhynia, Chernihiv, Poltava, Kharkiv, Katerynoslav Kherson, Taurus (excluding Crimea). The final demarcation of the borders of the Ukrainian People's Republic as well as the annexation of parts of the Kursk, Kholm, Voronezh provinces and the neighboring gubernias and areas where the majority of the population is Ukrainian, will be determined in agreement with the organized will of the peoples.

We declare the following to all citizens of these lands:

Henceforth, on the territory of the Ukrainian People's Republic, the existing property rights on lands of the nobility and on agricultural lands of other non-toiling ownership, including deeded lands, [lands owned by] monasteries and ministries, and church lands, are abolished.

In asserting that these lands are the property of the entire working people, and that they be recognized as such without compensation [to former proprietors], the Ukrainian Central Rada entrusts the Secretary General for Land Affairs to prepare legislation immediately to regulate the manner in which land committees, elected by the people, should manage these lands until [the convocation of] the Constituent Assembly.

The labor of the workers in the Ukrainian People's Republic must be placed on an orderly basis immediately. Now, we proclaim: *from this day forth, an eight-hour workday is instituted in all enterprises on the territory of the Ukrainian People's Republic.*

The difficult and terrible time which all of Russia and, with her, our Ukraine is experiencing, demands a proper organization of production, steady distribution of consumer products and a better organization of labor. Therefore, we charge the General Secretariat for Labor, together with the representatives of the workers, with the immediate establishment of *state control over production in the Ukraine*, guarding the interests of both the Ukraine and all of Russia.

For the fourth year blood is being spilt on the battlefields; and the strength of the peoples of the world is destroyed in vain. In the name of the Ukrainian Republic and in expression of its will, we, the Ukrainian Central Rada, shall firmly insist that *peace be instituted quickly. To this end, we shall use resolute means to force through the Central Government, both allies and enemies to begin peace negotiations at once.*

Likewise, we shall see to it that the rights of the Ukrainian people in Russia and outside Russia are not infringed upon by the peace treaty [that is negotiated] at the Peace Conference. However, until the beginning of peace, each citizen of the Republic of the Ukraine, together with the citizens of all other nations of the Russian Republic, should stand fast at his post, both at the battlefield and at home.

Recently, the bright achievements of the revolution have been dimmed by the reinstatement of the death penalty. We proclaim:

*Henceforth, on the territory of the Ukrainian Republic, the death penalty is abolished.*

All prisoners, all those detained for political activity committed prior to this date, including those sentenced and those not yet sentenced or charged, are hereby granted full amnesty. A law will be promulgated to that effect immediately. The court in the Ukraine should be just [and] in conformity with the spirit of the people. With that goal in view, we direct the General Secretariat for Justice to take all measures necessary to bring order to the judicial system and to assure its compliance with the legal conceptions of the people.

We direct the General Secretariat for Internal Affairs [as follows]:

*To use all means to strengthen and broaden the rights of the local bodies of self-government which serve as organs of the higher administrative authorities in the localities, and to establish its closest ties and cooperation with the organs of revolutionary democracy which should constitute the best basis for a free, democratic life.*

Furthermore, the Ukrainian People's Republic shall secure all freedoms won by the All-Russian revolution: freedom of speech, press, worship, assembly, association, strikes, inviolability of person and residence, and the right and opportunity to use the native language in dealings with all administrative agencies.

The Ukrainian people, who have fought long years for their national freedom and have won it today, shall firmly defend the free national development of all nationalities residing in the Ukraine; therefore, we proclaim: *The Great-Russian, Jewish, Polish and other peoples in the Ukraine are granted national-personal autonomy* to guarantee their own self-government in all matters of their national life; and we charge our general Secretariat for National Affairs to present to us, within the shortest possible time, legislative drafts for [guaranteeing this] national-personal autonomy.

The matter of provisions is the root of the power of government in this difficult and responsible time. The Ukrainian People's Republic should strain all its powers to save not only itself, but also the front and those parts of the Russian Republic which need our aid.

Citizens! In the name of the Ukrainian People's Republic within a federated Russia, we, the Ukrainian Central Rada, call upon all, to struggle decisively against all anarchy and destruction and to work towards the great fraternal construction of new governmental forms which will grant the great and weakened Republic of Russia health, strength, and a new future. The determination of these forms shall be made at the Ukrainian and All-Russian Constituent Assemblies.

*The date for the election of the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly shall be December 27, 1917; the day of its convocation shall be January 9, 1918.*

A law regulating the convocation of this Ukrainian Constituent Assembly shall be promulgated immediately.

Hunczak, pp. 387-391.



## NOTIFICATION TO ALLIED GOVERNMENTS OF THE FORMATION OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT AND OF THE SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR AN ARMISTICE

November 7 (20) 1917

*The new Soviet government followed the call for an armistice contained in the Decree on Peace with a formal note from Trotsky delivered to each of the Allied ambassadors, along with formal notification of the establishment of the new government. The same note, with appropriate change of names, was sent to each Allied ambassador.*

I herewith have the honour to inform you, Mr. Ambassador, that the All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies organised on November 8th a new Government of the Russian Republic, the Council of People's Commissars. The chairman of this Government is Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, and the direction of foreign policy is entrusted to me as the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

Calling your attention to the text of the proposed armistice and democratic peace without annexations and indemnities, and on the basis of self-determination of nations which was approved by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, I have the honour to request you to consider the above-mentioned document as a formal proposal for an immediate armistice on all fronts and the immediate opening of peace negotiations, with which proposal the plenipotentiary Government of the Russian Republic appeals simultaneously to all the warring peoples and their Governments.

Accept assurances, Mr. Ambassador, of the sincere respect of the Soviet Government for the people of the United States, who like all other people are worn out by this unexampled butchery and who cannot but aim for peace.

*The Soviet Union and Peace*, pp. 25-26.



ORDER TO COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF DUKHONIN REGARDING AN  
ARMISTICE, CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT LEADERS  
AND GENERAL DUKHONIN, AND THE LATTER'S DISMISSAL

November 7-9 (20-22) 1917

*Making progress on armistice talks and establishing control over the army command were both critical issues for the new government. They were intertwined in the following three documents. First, the Council of People's Commissars instructed General Dukhonin, Acting Commander-in-Chief, to start armistice talks immediately; Dukhonin delayed. There followed a direct-line conversation between Lenin, N.V. Krylenko and Stalin for the government and Field Headquarters. The evasiveness of Dukhonin's answers led to his dismissal and announcement of Krylenko's appointment as Commander in Chief, as described in the third document, which was sent to all military units. Shortly afterwards, as Krylenko arrived at headquarters to take command, Dukhonin was killed by rioting soldiers. These actions gave the Bolsheviks effective control of what remained of army field headquarters.*

[NOVEMBER 7]

CITIZEN SUPREME COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

The Council of People's Commissars by commission of the All-Russian Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies has assumed the government together with the obligations to propose to all belligerent nations and to their governments an immediate armistice on all fronts and immediate opening of negotiations with a view to concluding peace on democratic principles. Now when the government of Soviets has been confirmed in all the most important points of the country the Council of People's Commissars considers it necessary to make without delay a formal proposal for armistice to all belligerent countries, both to Allies and to those engaged in hostile operations against us. An announcement to this effect has been sent by the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs to all the plenipotentiary representatives of Allied countries in Petrograd.

You, Citizen Supreme Commander in Chief, [are ordered by] the Council of People's Commissars, in fulfilment of the decision of All-Russian Congress of the Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, commissions, immediately upon receiving the present announcement, to address to the military authorities of the hostile armies a proposal to immediately cease military operations with a view to opening peace negotiations. Whilst



charging you with the conduct of these preliminary negotiations the Council of People's Commissars orders you first to report without interruption to the council by direct wire regarding the progress of your negotiations with the representatives of the hostile armies; second, to sign the act of armistice only by a preliminary agreement with the Council of People's Commissars.

The President of the Council of People's Commissars

V. LENIN

The Commissar for Foreign Affairs

L. TROTSKY

The Commissar for Military Affairs

KRYLENKO

[NOVEMBER 9]

DIRECT-LINE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND FIELD H.Q.

Is that the Commander-in-Chief?

Dieterichs here.

We should like to speak to the Acting Commander-in-Chief. If General Dukhonin is no longer charged with these duties, please let us have the person now acting in his stead. As far as we are aware, General Dukhonin has not yet resigned.

Field H.Q. replying: Acting C.-in-C. General Dukhonin waited for your call until 1 a.m. and is now asleep. The telegraph was out of order, and later was used by Field H.Q. to communicate with G.H.Q.

Could you tell us whether you have received a wireless message from the Council of People's Commissars sent at 4:00 o'clock, and what has been done to carry out the instructions of the Council of People's Commissars?

Field H.Q. replying: An undated and unnumbered message of state importance was received, and that is why General Dukhonin requested General Manikovsky for the necessary guarantees confirming its authenticity.

What was Manikovsky's reply, at what time was the query sent, and was it radioed, telephoned or telegraphed?

Field H.Q. replying: No answer has been received yet, and a request was sent an hour ago to speed up the reply.

Please specify the time and means used in sending the first query. Will you hurry up, please?

Field H.Q. replying: The message was telegraphed and radioed to General Manikovsky—the time, just a minute—The message was sent at 19:50.

Why wasn't a copy of the query sent to me, the People's Commissar for War? From a personal conversation with me the C.-in-C. was aware that General Manikovsky's sole responsibility is continuity of technical operations in logistics and food supplies, and that I have been entrusted with the political direction of and responsibility for the War Ministry's activity.

Field H.Q. replying: I can say nothing at all about this.

We declare most emphatically that we place all the responsibility for the delay in this crucial state matter upon General Dukhonin and unconditionally demand: first, the immediate dispatch of truce envoys, and second, General Dukhonin's personal presence on the line at 11 a.m. sharp tomorrow. Should the delay result in famine, disorganisation or defeat, or anarchic revolts, the full blame will fall upon you, and the soldiers will be duly informed of it.

Field H.Q. replying: I shall inform General Dukhonin of this.

When? Right away? We are waiting for Dukhonin.

Field H.Q. replying: I shall wake him up at once.

This is Acting C.-in-C. General Dukhonin.

The People's Commissars here; what's your answer?

I see from the tape I just got of your conversation with G.H.Q. that your message to me was sent before any decision was taken on the substance of the message signed by the People's Commissars Ulyanov—Lenin, Trotsky and Krylenko; in view of this I must have the following factual information: (1) Has the Council of People's Commissars received any reply to its message to the belligerent powers containing the Decree on Peace; (2) What was to be done with the Rumanian Army, which is a part of our front; (3) Was there any intention of engaging in talks about a separate armistice and with whom, only with the Germans or with the Turks, or are we to negotiate a general armistice?

The text of the message sent to you is absolutely clear and to the point; it speaks of an immediate opening of armistice talks with all the belligerents, and we resolutely deny the right to delay this matter of state importance by any preliminary queries whatsoever; we insist that truce envoys should be dispatched immediately and that we receive progress reports every hour.

Field H.Q. replying: My questions are of a purely technical character and unless they are answered it will be impossible to negotiate.

You must be aware that many technical, rather detailed questions will arise during the talks, and we shall answer them as they arise or are raised by the enemy; that is why we demand once again, in the form of an ultimatum, that formal armistice negotiations be started unconditionally and without delay with all the belligerent countries, both Allied and those hostile to us. Please state your reply in precise terms.

I can understand only one thing, and it is that you cannot negotiate directly with the powers. It is even less possible for me to do so on your behalf. Only a central government supported by the army and the nation can have enough prestige and importance for the enemy to lend these negotiations the authority necessary to achieve results. I also believe that an early conclusion of a general peace is in Russia's interests.

Do you flatly refuse to give us a precise reply and carry out our orders?

I have given you a precise reply as to the reasons why I find it impossible to put your message into effect, and I repeat that the peace Russia needs can be obtained only by a central government. *Dukhonin.*

In the name of the Government of the Russian Republic, on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars, we dismiss you from your post for refusing to obey government orders and for conduct that entails untold hardships for the working people of all countries and especially the armies. We order you, on pain of responsibility under war-time laws, to continue your duties pending the arrival at Field Headquarters of a new Commander-in-Chief or a person empowered by him to take over from you. Ensign Krylenko is appointed Commander-in-Chief.

Lenin, Stalin, Krylenko

[NOVEMBER 9]

WIRELESS MESSAGE TO ALL REGIMENTAL, DIVISIONAL, CORPS, ARMY AND OTHER COMMITTEES, TO ALL SOLDIERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY AND SAILORS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY NAVY

On the night of November 7 the Council of People's Commissars sent a wireless message to Commander-in-Chief Dukhonin ordering him immediately and formally to propose an armistice to all the belligerent countries, both Allied and those hostile to us.

This message was received at Field Headquarters on November 8 at 5:05 a.m. Dukhonin was ordered to keep the Council of People's Commissars constantly informed of the progress of the negotiations and to sign the armistice agreement only after it had been approved by the Council of People's Commissars. Simultaneously, a similar proposal to conclude an armistice was formally submitted to all the plenipotentiary representatives of the Allied countries in Petrograd.

Not having received a reply from Dukhonin by the evening of November 8, the Council of People's Commissars empowered Lenin, Stalin and Krylenko to ascertain the causes of the delay from Dukhonin over the direct line.

The conversation lasted from 2 a.m. to 4:30 a.m. on November 9. Dukhonin made numerous attempts to evade giving an explanation of his conduct and a precise reply to the orders of the government, but when Dukhonin was given a categorical order to enter immediately into formal negotiations for an armistice, he refused to obey. Thereupon, in the name of the Government of the Russian Republic, on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars, Dukhonin was informed that he was dismissed from his post for refusing to obey government orders and for conduct that entailed untold hardships for the working people of all countries and especially for the armies. At the same time, Dukhonin was ordered to continue his duties pending the arrival of a new Commander-in-Chief or a person empowered by the latter to take over from Dukhonin. Ensign Krylenko has been appointed the new Commander-in-Chief.

Soldiers, the cause of peace is in your hands! Do not allow the counter-revolutionary generals to frustrate the great cause of peace, place them under guard in order to avert acts of summary justice unworthy of a revolutionary army and to prevent these generals from escaping the trial that awaits them. Maintain the strictest revolutionary and military order.

Let the regiments at the front immediately elect representatives to start formal negotiations for an armistice with the enemy.

The Council of People's Commissars authorises you to do this.

Do everything possible to keep us informed of every step in the negotiations. The Council of People's Commissars is alone authorised to sign the final armistice agreement.

Soldiers, the cause of peace is in your hands! Maintain vigilance, restraint and energy, and the cause of peace will triumph!

In the name of the Government of the Russian Republic

V. Ulyanov (Lenin), Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

N. Krylenko, People's Commissar for War and Commander-in-Chief

The first document is from *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: 1918, Russia*, Vol. 1, p. 247 (with modifications by the editor), and the second and third are from Lenin, Vol. 26, pp. 308-312.



## TROTSKY'S REPORT ON THE FIRST STEPS OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

November 8 (21) 1917

*Trotsky apprised the Central Executive Committee of the international situation and of Soviet steps toward peace negotiations. Despite uncertainties, he saw the war as coming to an end because of the Russian Revolution. This statement also serves to show the early Soviet beliefs about what motivated the policies of other countries. After his report, Trotsky announced his message to the Allied countries and the order to Dukhonin about an armistice (see preceding two documents), and that the peace decree was being readied for translation and publication.*

Our policy in the field of international relations is dictated by the decree on peace adopted by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. The very fact of its adoption was unexpected for the old routine habits of thought of the European bourgeois world, and the decree was first taken as a party declaration rather than as a definite act of State power. It was not until the lapse of some time that the ruling classes of Europe began to realize that they were dealing with a proposal emanating from a State which represented many millions of people. The bourgeoisie of the Allied countries adopted an extremely hostile attitude towards this decree. The attitude of the Governments of the enemy countries was ambiguous, and could not have

been otherwise. On the one hand, the revolution interested them as a means of aggravating the confusion in Russia and of improving their own military prospects, and this was a cause for rejoicing. On the other hand, in so far as they understood that they were dealing not with an ephemeral phenomenon, capable only of disorganizing, in so far as they saw that the Soviet Government was supported by the large armed masses, to that extent they could not fail to recognize that the victory of the Soviets was a fact of the greatest international importance. In this respect the attitude in Germany toward the news of the victory over Kerensky is significant. Our broadcast from Tsarskoe Selo was picked up by the Austrians, but the Hamburg radio tried to jam the broadcast of the telegram. The ambiguity in the German attitude consists in the fact that as Germans they are ready to rejoice; as bourgeois propertied classes they see that they have cause to fear.

The Soviet Government had to formulate proposals for peace negotiations and an armistice. Military and political circumstances have, up to now, not been favourable to the completion of this political step. Krasnov's detachment was at the approaches to Petersburg, and it had to be assumed that it would be followed by other units. In Moscow we still struggled for power. The news from the provinces was indefinite, partly because of the so-called neutrality of the postal and telegraph union.

In western Europe the mood was one of waiting. There was lack of confidence in the new Soviet Government. The mass of the workers had confidence in the Government, but there was fear that it would not be able to survive. Now the Government has been established as a reality in both capitals of the country, in many important provincial centres, among the vast majority of the army, and it is attracting the peasant masses. These facts are indisputable, whatever may be the sabotage by prominent officials and intellectuals. The Council of People's Commissars firmly believes that, with the assistance of junior officials, this sabotage must be broken, for the saboteurs are agents of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

Now even the most hardened European diplomats appreciate that it is impossible to smash the Soviet Government either in a day, or in a week. They are confronted with the complete political helplessness of the bourgeoisie in Russia, in spite of its enormous economic power. They have to reckon with the Soviet Government as a fact, and to establish certain relations with it. These relations are being formed empirically, in practice; the agents of the European Powers are compelled to approach us with all sorts of questions concerning current matters, such as questions of leaving or entering the country, etc. With regard to political relations, this is not uniform on the part of the various Powers. Probably the most hostile of them is the Government of Great Britain, the country whose upper bourgeoisie risk losing less than anybody else from the war, and hope to gain most. The drawn-out nature of the war is not in the least inconsistent with British policy. As to France, the majority of the petty-bourgeois democracy are peacefully inclined, but they are helpless. The petty-bourgeois Cabinet is dependent on the Stock Exchange. The small French shopkeeper is a pacifist and does not personally know anything about those secret treaties and imperialist aims for which he sheds his blood. France had suffered most from the war. France feels that the prolongation of the war threatens it with degeneration and death. The struggle of the working class against war is growing. The acuteness of the situation in France and the growth of the opposition on the part of the working class within the country has led to France reacting to the creation of Soviet power by forming the Clemenceau Ministry. Clemenceau is a radical of the extreme jacobin chauvinist wing. In the course of three years of war he could not form his own Ministry; the Clemenceau Ministry now formed without the participation of the socialists and directed against the socialists is a convulsion of the French petty-bourgeois democracy, terror-stricken by the setting up of the Soviet Government. Petty-bourgeois France considers us to be a Government in alliance with Wilhelm, and perhaps a Government of struggle against France.

The scanty news from Italy speaks about the enthusiasm with which the working class greeted the Soviet Government. Italy hesitated for nine months which camp it would be more

advantageous to join, and in the course of those nine months the working class of Italy had an opportunity of recognizing the fatal effect of collaboration of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie. As to the middle classes and the peasantry, they became disillusioned in this war, and this disillusionment provided a favourable sounding-board for the protesting voice of the proletariat.

The United States began to intervene in the war after three years, under the influence of the sober calculations of the American Stock Exchange. America could not tolerate the victory of one coalition over the other. America is interested in the weakening of both coalitions and in the consolidation of the hegemony of American capital. Apart from that, American war industry is interested in the war. During the war American exports have more than doubled and have reached a figure not reached by any other capitalist State. Exports go almost entirely to the Allied countries. When in January Germany came out for unrestricted U-boat warfare, all railway stations and harbours in the United States were overloaded with the output of the war industries. Transport was disorganized and New York witnessed food riots such as we ourselves have never seen here. Then the finance capitalists sent an ultimatum to Wilson: to secure the sale of the output of the war industries within the country. Wilson accepted the ultimatum, and hence the preparations for war and war itself. America does not aim at territorial conquests; America can be tolerant with regard to the existence of the Soviet Government, since it is satisfied with the exhaustion of the Allied countries and Germany. Apart from that America is interested in investing its capital in Russia.

As to Germany, its internal economic situation forces it take up an attitude of semi-tolerance towards the Soviet Government. The peace proposals made by Germany are partly feelers: partly they were dictated by the anxiety to lay responsibility for the continuation of the war on the other side.

All the news we have about the impression made in Europe by the decree on peace proves that our most optimistic assumptions were justified. The German working class is fully aware of what is happening in Russia at present; perhaps it appreciates these events even better than people in Russia itself. The actions of the working class in Russia are more revolutionary than their consciousness; but the consciousness of the European working class has developed over decades; and, starting from a class analysis of the events now taking place in Russia, the proletariat of the West understands that power has not been seized here by a handful of conspirators with the support of the Red Guard and the sailors, as the bourgeois press tries to make out; it understands that here a new epoch in the history of the world is beginning. The working class have taken the machinery of state into their own hands, and this machinery must necessarily become the instrument of the struggle for peace. A fatal blow was dealt to war on the historic night of 25 October. War as a colossal enterprise of the various classes and groups is dead. The European Governments are no longer concerned with the realization of their initial aims, but with the liquidation of this enterprise with the least possible damage to their rule. It is not possible for either side to think of victory; and the intervention of the working class in this conflict is a factor of immeasurable importance. The decree on peace is being widely broadcast throughout Europe. The war is at its last gasp and it is the task of the Soviet Government to deal it a final blow by the formal proposal of peace negotiations.

The secret treaties are in my possession. The senior officials of the Ministry, Neratov and Tatishchev, have handed them to me voluntarily, as far as one can speak at all of voluntary consent. These are not treaties written on parchment; they are in essentials diplomatic correspondence and coded telegrams, exchanged between Governments. I shall begin their publication tomorrow. They are even more cynical in their contents than we supposed, and we do not doubt that when the German Social Democrats obtain access to the safes in which the secret treaties are kept, they will show us that German imperialism in its cynicism and rapacity yields in nothing to the rapacity of the Allied countries.

Degras, *Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy*, Vol. 1, pp. 4-8, with small omissions filled in by the editor.

# ABOLITION OF SOCIAL ESTATES, CIVIL RANKS, TITLES, AND THEIR REPLACEMENT BY "CITIZENS OF THE RUSSIAN REPUBLIC"

November 10 (23) 1917

*This decree of the Council of People's Commissars and the Central Executive Committee abolished the myriad social, legal and civil distinctions which were a part of Russian society, and confirmed the social revolution sweeping Russia in 1917. The original motion for such a decree was introduced by the Left SRs. "Citizen," inspired by the French Revolution, never became a popular term and "comrade" remained the generally used revolutionary appellation.*

## DECREE ON THE ABOLITION OF SOCIAL CLASSES AND CIVIL RANKS

1. All classes and class divisions of citizens, class privileges and disabilities, class organizations and institutions which have until now existed in Russia, as well as all civil ranks, are abolished.

2. All designations (as merchant, nobleman, burgher, peasant, etc.), titles (as Prince, Count, etc.) and distinctions of civil ranks (Privy, State, and other Councillors), are abolished, and one common designation is established for all the population of Russia—citizen of the Russian Republic.

3. The properties of the noblemen's class institutions are hereby transferred to corresponding district self-governing bodies.

4. The properties of merchants' and burghers' associations are hereby placed at the disposal of corresponding municipal bodies.

5. All class institutions, transactions and archives are hereby transferred to the jurisdiction of corresponding municipal and district bodies.

6. All corresponding clauses of the laws which have existed until now are abolished.

7. This decree becomes effective from the day of its publications, and is to be immediately put into effect, by the local Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

*The Nation*, February 22, 1919, p. 303.



## ESTABLISHMENT OF WORKERS' CONTROL IN INDUSTRY

November 14 (27) 1917

*By autumn of 1917 the industrial economy was in chaos, with plant closings and labor conflict endemic. The industrial workers seized upon "workers' control" as the means both of securing their political gains of 1917 and rescuing their jobs in the face of plant closures. "Workers' control" (rabochii kontrol) originally meant something more like "workers' supervision," implying that they had a voice in industrial matters. After October, however, it increasingly came to mean extensive worker involvement in the running of the factory. Most advocates saw it as a step toward democratic decentralizing of decision making as well. Lacking any clear strategy for dealing with the economic chaos surrounding them or plans for managing industries, and faced with worker sentiments, the Bolshevik leaders at first gave way to demand for workers' control—which also helped complete the destruction of the old economic order—despite the fact that it was contrary to their own commitment to centralized control and direction of the economy. A decree on workers' control had been promised by the Revolutionary Committee's "To the Citizens of Russia," of October 25 (see above). Although held up by serious disagreements among the Bolsheviks, Left SRs, factory committee and trade union spokesmen, it was finally approved by the Central Executive Committee on November 14.*

## DECREE ON WORKERS' CONTROL

(1) For the purpose of planned regulation of the national economy in all industrial, commercial, banking, agricultural, transport, co-operative production societies and other undertakings which employ wage labour or give out work to be done at home, workers' control is to be introduced over production, over buying and selling of products and raw materials, over their storing and also over the finances of the undertakings.

(2) Workers' control will be exercised by all the workers in the particular enterprise through their elected organs such as works' committees, factory committees, and so forth, representatives of the employees and technicians having to belong to these bodies.

(3) A local Council of Workers' Control will be created in each large town, in each province or industrial district, which as an organ of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies will be composed of representatives of the trade unions, of the works' and factory committees and of other workers' committees and workers' co-operatives.

(4) Until the Congress of the Councils of Workers' Control, an All-Russian Council of Workers' Control will be set up in Petrograd to which representatives from the following organisations will belong: the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, 5; the All-Russian Central E.C. of the Peasants' Deputies, 5; the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions, 5; the All-Russian Centre of the Workers' Cooperatives, 2; the All-Russian Bureau of the Factory and Works' Committees, 5; the All-Russian Union of Engineers and Technicians, 5; the All-Russian Union of Agriculturalists, 2; each All-Russian workers' union with less than 100,000 members, 1; and with more than 100,000 members, 2; the Petrograd Council of Trade Unions, 2.

(5) Commissions of specialists (technicians, accountants, etc.), will be attached to the higher bodies as auditors who will investigate the financial and technical side of the enterprises, at the instigation of these higher bodies or at the request of the lower organisations of workers' control.

(6) The Workers' Control Committees have the right to supervise the management, to determine a minimum of production and to take measures for ascertaining the cost of production of goods.

(7) The Workers' Control Committees have the right of controlling the whole business correspondence of the enterprise; the employers being held legally responsible for any concealment of correspondence. Secrecy in business is abolished. The owners are under obligation to lay before the Workers' Control all books and accounts for the current year and for past business years.

(8) The decisions of the Committees of Workers' Control are binding on the owners of enterprises and can only be cancelled by decision of the higher organs of Workers' Control.

(9) The employer or manager of the enterprise can within a period of three days lodge a complaint against the decisions of the lower Committees of Workers' Control with the corresponding higher committees.

(10) In all enterprises the owners and the representatives of the workers and employees are responsible to the State for the strictest order and discipline and for the upkeep of the property. Whoever hides materials, goods produced or orders, whoever presents false accounts or is responsible for similar abuses, is subject to heavy penalties.

(11) The district Councils of Workers' Control (paragraph 3) are to decide all disputes and conflicts between the lower Control Committees and also all complaints made by the owners of the enterprises; they are to issue instructions (conformable to the type of production and the local conditions) within the limits of the decisions and directions of the All-Russian Council of Workers' Control and are to supervise the activities of the lower Control Committees.

(12) The All-Russian Council of Workers' Control shall work out general plans of control and instructions, issue binding decisions, regulate the mutual relations of the District Councils of Workers' Control and shall be the highest authority for all affairs connected with workers' control.

(13) The All-Russian Council of Workers' Control is to bring the activities of the Workers' Control Committees into line with those of all the other institutions which direct the organisation of the national economy.

An order concerning the mutual relations between the All-Russian Council of Workers' Control and the other institutions which organise and regulate the national economy will be issued separately.

(14) All laws and circulars which circumscribe the activities of the factory, works and other committees and councils of workers and employees are annulled.

Astrov, Vol. 2, pp. 474-476.



### APPEAL TO BELLIGERENTS ON PEACE

November 14 (27) 1917

*The Germans accepted the Bolshevik appeal for an armistice. The Soviet leaders, desperate for peace but not wanting to have to face the Central Powers alone, delayed briefly while they launched a new appeal to the Allies to join the talks. They appealed not only to the Allied governments, but also to the "soldiers, workers and peasants." Nothing came of it, however, and they had to proceed with the armistice talks alone.*

In reply to our proposal for an immediate armistice on all fronts with a view to the conclusion of a democratic peace without annexations and contributions, and with a guarantee of the rights of national self-determination, the German High Command agreed to the conduct of peace negotiations. Krylenko, Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of the Republic, proposed the postponement of the opening of negotiations for an armistice for five days, until December 1st, in order once again to invite the Allied Governments to define their attitude to the question of peaceful negotiations. Military action was suspended on the Russian front by mutual consent. Obviously there could be no transference of troops during those five days, on either side. The decisive step has been taken. The victorious Workers' and Peasants' Revolution in Russia brought the question of peace into the forefront of world attention. The period of vacillations, delays and red-tape agreements is over. Now all Governments, all classes, all parties in all the belligerent countries are called upon to give a plain answer to the question: "Do you agree to join us on December 1st in negotiations for an immediate armistice and general peace?" The avoidance by the workers in field and factory of another winter campaign, with all its horrors and disasters, or the continuance of bloodshed in Europe, hangs upon their answer to this question. We, the Council of People's Commissars, appeal with this question to the Governments of our allies: France, Great Britain, Italy, the United States, Belgium, Serbia, Rumania, Japan, and China. We ask them, in the face of the whole world: "Will you begin peaceful negotiations with us from December 1st?" We, the Council of People's Commission, appeal to the allied peoples and, first and foremost, to their toiling masses: "Will they consent to drag on with this pointless slaughter, and go blindly to the ruin of the whole of European culture?" We demand that the labour parties in the allied countries give an immediate answer to the question: "Do they want open peace negotiations on December 1st?" A plain question has been put. Soldiers, proletarians, toilers, peasants! Do you want to join us in a decisive step towards a people's peace?

We, the Council of People's Commissars, appeal to the toiling masses in Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria. The peace which we propose must be a people's



peace. It must be an honest agreement, guaranteeing to each nation freedom for economic and cultural development. Such a peace can only be concluded by means of a direct and courageous struggle of the revolutionary masses against all imperialist plans and aggressive aspirations. The Workers' and Peasants' Revolution has already declared its peace programme. We have published the secret agreements of the Tsar and the bourgeoisie with the allies and have declared them not binding for the Russian people. We proposed to all nations openly to conclude a new agreement on the principles of consent and co-operation. The official and semi-official representatives of the ruling classes in the allied countries replied to our proposal by a refusal to recognise the Soviet Government and enter into an agreement with it for peace negotiations. The Government of the victorious revolution does not require recognition from the professional representatives of capitalist diplomacy, but we do ask the people: "Does reactionary diplomacy express your ideas and aspirations? Do the people agree to allow the diplomats to let the great opportunity for peace offered by the Russian Revolution slip through their fingers?" The answer to these questions must be given without delay, and it must be an answer in deeds and not merely in words. The Russian army and the Russian people cannot and will not wait longer. On December 1st we shall begin peace negotiations. If the Allied nations do not send their representatives, we shall carry on negotiations with the Germans alone. We want a general peace, but if the bourgeoisie in the allied countries force us to conclude a separate peace the whole responsibility will be theirs. Soldiers, workers and peasants, in France, England and Italy, the United States, Belgium, Serbia, Rumania, Japan, and China! On December 1st peace negotiations will begin! We await your representatives! Act, without the loss of a single hour!

No more winter campaign! No more war! Long live peace and the fraternity of nations!

*The Soviet Union and Peace*, pp. 26-28.



#### APPEAL TO THE MOSLEMS OF RUSSIA AND THE EAST

November 20 (December 3) 1917

*Following from ideas found in Lenin's Imperialism (1916), the new government quickly turned to call for the peoples of Asia to rise against European imperialism in order to hasten the spread of revolution. More immediately it served also as an appeal for support from the Moslem peoples of Russia, and was soon followed by creation of a Commissar for Moslem Affairs. This effort had a chequered history as the Soviet leaders tried to appeal to Moslem sentiments while preventing them from leading to creation of autonomous political movements or states. Some sources date it to November 24 (December 7), when it was published in Izvestiia.*

#### APPEAL OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS TO THE LABORING MOSLEMS OF RUSSIA AND THE EAST

COMRADES! BROTHERS! Great events are occurring in Russia! An end is drawing near to the murderous war, which arose out of the bargainings of foreign powers. The rule of the plunderers, exploiting the peoples of the world, is trembling. The ancient citadel of slavery and serfdom is cracking under the blows of the Russian Revolution. The world of violence and oppression is approaching its last days. A new world is arising, a world of the toilers and the liberated. At the head of this revolution is the Workers' and Peasants' Government in Russia, the Council of People's Commissars.

Revolutionary councils of workers', soldiers' and peasants' deputies are scattered over the whole of Russia. The power in the country is in the hands of the people. The toiling masses

of Russia burn with the single desire to achieve an honest peace and help the oppressed people of the world to win their freedom.

Russia is not alone in this sacred cause. The mighty summons to freedom emitted by the Russian Revolution, has aroused all the toilers in the East and West. The people of Europe, exhausted by war, are already stretching out their hands to us, in our work for peace. The workers and soldiers of the West are already rallying around the banner of socialism, storming the strongholds of imperialism. Even far-off India, that land which has been oppressed by the European "torchbearers of civilisation" for so many centuries, has raised the standard of revolt, organising its councils of deputies, throwing the hated yoke of slavery from its shoulders, and summoning the people of the East to the struggle for freedom.

The sway of capitalist plunder and violence is being undermined. The ground is slipping from under the feet of the imperialist pillagers.

In the face of these great events, we appeal to you, toiling and dispossessed Mohammedan workers, in Russia and the East.

Mohammedans of Russia, Volga and Crimean Tartars, Kirghisi and Sarti in Siberia and Turkestan, Turcos and Tartars in the Trans-Caucasus, Chechenzi and mountain Cossacks! All you, whose mosques and shrines have been destroyed, whose faith and customs have been violated by the Tsars and oppressors of Russia! Henceforward your faith and customs, your national and cultural departments, are declared free and inviolable! Organise your national life freely and unimpeded. It is your right. Know that your rights, like those of all the peoples of Russia, will be guarded by the might of the revolution and its organs, the Councils of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies! Support this revolution and its representative Government!

Mohammedans of the East! Persians, Turks, Arabs and Indians! All you whose bodies and property, freedom and native land have been for centuries exploited by the European beasts of prey! All you whose countries the plunderers who began the war now desire to share among themselves! *We declare that the secret treaties of the deposed Tsar as to the annexation of Constantinople, confirmed by the late Kerensky Government—are now null and void. The Russian Republic, and its Government, the Council of People's Commissars, are opposed to the annexation of foreign lands: Constantinople must remain in the hands of the Mohammedans.*

*We declare that the treaty for the division of Persia is null and void. Immediately after the cessation of military activities troops will be withdrawn from Persia and the Persians will be guaranteed the right of free self-determination.*

*We declare that the treaty for the division of Turkey and the subduction from it of Armenia, is null and void. Immediately after the cessation of military activities, the Armenians will be guaranteed the right of free self-determination of their political fate.*

It is not from Russia and its revolutionary Government that you have to fear enslavement, but from the robbers of European imperialism, from those who have laid your native lands waste and converted them into their colonies.

Overthrow these robbers and enslavers of your lands! Now, when war and ruin are breaking down the pillars of the old world, when the whole world is burning with indignation against the imperialist brigands, when the least spark of indignation bursts out in a mighty flame of revolution, when even the Indian Mohammedans, oppressed and tormented by the foreign yoke, are rising in revolt against their slave-drivers—now it is impossible to keep silent. Lose no time in throwing off the yoke of the ancient oppressors of your land! Let them no longer violate your hearths! You must yourselves be masters in your own land! You yourselves must arrange your life as you yourselves see fit! You have the right to do this, for your fate is in your own hands!

Comrades! Brothers! Advance firmly and resolutely towards an honest, democratic peace! We bear the liberation of the oppressed peoples of the world on our banners!

Mohammedans in Russia! Mohammedans in the East! We look to you for sympathy and support in the work of renewing of the world!

## ABOLITION OF THE OLD JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW ONE

November 22 (December 5) 1917

*Marxist theories about the class nature of legal systems meant that the new regime had to move quickly to abolish the old judicial system and establish a new one. This decree does the former, but the stopgap nature of the new procedures reflects the difficulty of the latter task. The clause making the party programs of the Bolsheviks and SRs override existing law is particularly interesting. These courts, which quickly came to be called "People's Courts," functioned poorly and dealt mainly with minor cases. More important cases were reserved to the Revolutionary Tribunals, established December 19, 1917 (see below). A basic revision in 1922 finally established an orderly judicial system.*

## DECREE OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS ON THE COURTS

The Council of People's Commissars resolves:

1. To abolish all existing general legal institutions, such as district courts, courts of appeal, and the governing Senate with all its departments, military and naval courts of all grades, as well as commercial courts, and to replace all these institutions with courts established on the basis of democratic elections.

Regarding further procedure and the continuation of unfinished cases a special decree will be issued.

Beginning October 25 of this year, the passage of time limits is stopped until the issuance of a special decree.

2. To abolish the existing institution of justices of the peace, and to replace the justices of the peace heretofore elected by indirect vote, by local courts consisting of a permanent local judge and two jurors, the latter of whom are summoned in pairs to each session from special lists of jurors. Local judges are henceforth to be elected on the basis of direct democratic vote, and, until the time of such elections, are to be chosen by regional and township Soviets, or, where there are none such, by district, city, and provincial Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

These same Soviets make up the lists of alternating jurors and determine the time of their presence at the session.

The former justices of the peace are not deprived of the right to be elected as local judges, either temporarily by the Soviets or finally by a democratic election, if they express their consent thereto.

Local judges adjudicate all civil cases to an amount not exceeding 3000 roubles, and criminal cases if the accused is liable to a penalty of not more than two years' deprivation of freedom. The verdicts and rulings of the local courts are final and no appeal can be taken against them. In cases in which the recovery of over 100 roubles in money or deprivation of freedom for more than seven days is adjudged, a request for review is allowed.

The court of appeals is the district session, and in the capitals the metropolitan session, of local judges.

For the trial of criminal cases at the fronts, local judges are elected by regimental Soviets in the same order, and where there are none, by the regimental committees.

Regarding procedure in other legal cases, a special decree will be issued.

3. To abolish all existing institutions of investigating magistrates and the procurator's office, as well as the grades of counsellors-at-law and private attorneys.

Until the reformation of the entire system of legal procedure, the preliminary investigation in criminal cases is made by the local judges singly, but their orders of personal detention and indictment must be confirmed by the decision of the entire local court.

The functions of prosecutors and counsel for defense, who are allowed even in the stage of preliminary investigation, and in civil cases the functions of solicitors, may be performed by all citizens of moral integrity, of either sex, who enjoy civil rights.

4. For the transfer and further direction of cases and suits, proceedings of the legal bodies as well as of officials engaged in preliminary investigation and the procurator's office, and also of the associations of the counsellors-at-law, the respective local Soviets elect special commissars, who take charge of the archives and the properties of those bodies.

All the lower and clerical personnel of the abolished institutions are ordered to continue in their positions and to perform, under the general direction of the commissars, all duties necessary in order to dispose of unfinished cases, and also to give information on appointed days to interested persons about the state of their cases.

5. Local judges try cases in the name of the Russian Republic, and are guided in their rulings and verdicts by the laws of the Governments which have been overthrown only in so far as those laws are not annulled by the revolution, and do not contradict the revolutionary conscience and revolutionary conception of right.

Note: All those laws are considered annulled which contradict the decrees of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies and the Workers' and Peasants' Government, also the minimum programs of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party and the party of Socialist-Revolutionaries.

6. In all civil as well as criminal cases the parties may resort to the arbitration court. The organisation of the arbitration court will be determined by a special decree.

7. The right of pardon and restoration of rights of persons convicted in criminal cases belongs henceforth to the legal authorities.

8. For the struggle against the counter-revolutionary forces by means of measures for the defense of the revolution and its accomplishments, and also for the trial of proceedings against profiteering, speculation, sabotage, and other misdeeds of merchants, manufacturers, officials and other persons, workers' and peasants' revolutionary tribunals are established, consisting of a chairman and six jurors, serving in turn, elected by provincial or city Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

For the conduct of the preliminary investigation in such cases, special investigating commissions are formed under the above Soviets.

All existing investigating commissions are abolished, and their cases and proceedings are transferred to the newly formed investigating commissions.

*The Nation*, December 28, 1918, p. 822, with minor modifications by the editor.



#### DEBATE ON THE OUTLAWING OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRATS AND ON THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AT THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

December 1 (14) 1917

*On November 28 the Council of People's Commissars ordered the arrest of "the leading bodies of the Constitutional Democratic Party" (Kadets), declaring it "a party of the enemies of the People." This created a great uproar, not only on the principle of censorship but also in light of the fact that the decree was in reaction to Kadet political demonstrations and because many of the arrested had just been elected to the Constituent Assembly (which raised yet other bothersome questions about political freedoms). The decree was the subject of a fierce debate at the Central Executive Committee between the Bolsheviks and Left SRs and others. During it one speaker warned that the repression being applied by the Bolsheviks against the Kadets would in the future be applied to other parties. Moreover, it quickly evolved into a debate about the integrity and purpose of the Constituent Assembly. The debate on these two issues*

*illustrates the bitter struggles going on inside the Central Executive Committee about the nature of the new government and the very purpose of the revolution. It had great implications for the future of the Soviet political system. Other items on the agenda that day are not included here.*

## SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

### 3. Outlawing of Kadets

SHTEYNBERG: The Left SRs have tried to take account of both the political and the formal [juridical] aspects of this decree. We think that if its object is to combat counter-revolution then one should not [be diverted from this aim] by a casual episode. There is no place in the class struggle for arbitrary repressive measures. One should fight by isolating [one's opponents] socially, not by technical means. The Soviet government should not apply the old outdated methods of Kerensky. What does it mean to declare the Kadet party 'enemies of the people'? Is anyone who wears a black cloak to be an enemy?

This decree shows political weakness and loss nerve, not strength. We demand that the revolutionary struggle be waged openly and honestly. The CEC should know who exactly is its foe and who its friend. The decree suggests a willingness to disrupt the Constituent Assembly, and we announce that we are categorically opposed to such a step. We are equally far distant from both sides and consider that each of them [i.e. the Kadets and the Bolsheviks] is making the same mistake. The Constituent Assembly should be subjected to the same test as was given to the coalition [Provisional] government. If it struggles against soviet power then it will destroy itself.

I should like to point out that for very many years the socialists taught the Russian people [to respect] the Constituent Assembly, and that the October insurrection likewise took place under this banner. On behalf of my fraction I insist that the assembly be called, in its [full] complement as [elected], and that it be presented with the questions of peace, land, and [workers'] control. We must not give the counter-revolutionaries this trump card but must strike the weapon from their hands. We must merge the Tauride Palace with Smolny, and let the people decide how this may best be done.

LENIN: If one takes the Constituent Assembly out of its [present] context of a class struggle which is turning into civil war, then there has never been an assembly which expressed more perfectly the people's will. But one cannot live in a world of fantasy. The Constituent Assembly has to act in a situation of civil war started by the bourgeoisie and the Kaledinites. First they tried to drag out the struggle in Moscow; then there was Kerensky's unsuccessful attempt to move troops against Petrograd; after that came the fruitless effort to organize the counter-revolutionary senior army commanders; and now they are trying to raise a revolt on the Don. This is bound to fail, because the toiling cossacks are opposed to the Kaledinites.

We are reproached for persecuting the Kadet party. But one cannot distinguish between class struggle and [the struggle against] political opponent[s]. When it is said that the Kadet party is not a strong force, this misrepresents the facts. The Kadet Central Committee is the political staff of the bourgeoisie. The Kadets have absorbed all the possessing classes; elements to the right of the Kadets have merged with them and support them.

It is suggested that we convoke the Constituent Assembly as it was [originally] devised. No, gentlemen, I beg your pardon! It was devised [as a weapon] against the people. We carried out the revolution in order to obtain guarantees that the Constituent Assembly would not be used against the people, that these guarantees would be in the government's hands. In our decree we gave a precise answer on this point. Don't try to read what is in our hearts: we are not concealing anything. We have said that when 400 deputies assemble, we shall convoke the Constituent Assembly. It is not our fault that the elections were held later than the day initially appointed. In some places the soviets themselves fixed the polling day later. Since the elections took place at different dates [in various regions], we had to fix the number of deputies that would suffice for the assembly to open.

An attempt was made to open the Constituent Assembly [by direct action of the deputies present], taking advantage of the fact that this number had not been legally prescribed. What position would the government have been in if it had permitted this to happen? The Soviet government acted correctly in ordaining how many deputies should be present for the assembly to be legitimate. This we have done. Whoever disagrees must criticize the decree; but if instead of [straightforward] criticism we hear only hints and general speculation, then we shall ignore them.

When a revolutionary class is waging war against the possessing classes that resist it, then it must suppress this resistance; and we shall suppress the possessors' resistance by all the methods which they used to suppress the proletariat; other methods have not yet been invented.

You say that one should isolate the bourgeoisie. But the Kadets, hiding behind the slogan of formal democracy, the slogan of the Constituent Assembly, are in fact initiating civil war. They say: 'we want to sit in the Constituent Assembly at the same time as we wage civil war'—and you reply with talk about isolating them! It is ridiculous to stop at measures of isolation. The bourgeoisie is using its capital to organize counter-revolution and to this there can be but one reply: prison! That is how [the Jacobins] acted in the great French revolution: they declared the bourgeois parties outside the law.

We are not persecuting people simply for formal breaches [of the law]; we are bringing forward a direct political charge against [an entire] political party. That is what the French revolutionaries did, too. This is our answer to those peasants who elected deputies without knowing whom they were voting for. Let the people know that the Constituent Assembly will not meet in the way that Kerensky hoped. We have introduced the right of recall, so the Constituent Assembly will not be the sort of gathering which the bourgeoisie dreamed of. Now that the convocation of the Constituent Assembly is but a few days away the bourgeoisie is organizing civil war, stepping up acts of sabotage, and wrecking the armistice. We shall not allow ourselves to be deceived by formal slogans. They want to sit in the Constituent Assembly and organize civil war at the same time. Let [our critics] examine our charges against the Kadet party in substance; let them try to show that the Kadet party is not a staff for waging civil war—a war they know will be hopeless and will drown the country in blood. Shteynberg did not try to prove this [was not so]. He forgot everything that has been discovered about the links between the Kadets and Kornilov. It was not we but Chernov, one of our political opponents, who discovered this link. It is suggested that we should [arrest only] the ringleaders, but we shall not drop the political charge levelled against [the Kadet party as] the directing staff of a whole class and substitute for it a mere hunt for a few individuals.

As for the objection that the Bolsheviks were themselves once proclaimed enemies of the people, this was only a threat; [in fact our opponents] did not dare to do this. We told them then: 'If you can do it, try to tell the people that the Bolsheviks as a party, as a tendency, are enemies of the people.' But they didn't dare. They just arrested individuals and slandered us. We told them: 'you cannot declare us enemies of the people, for you have not the shadow of a case in principle against the Bolsheviks; you can only spread slander.' Our accusation against the Kadet party will put an end to such petty methods of conducting a political struggle. We shall tell the people the truth, that its interests are superior to those of [any] democratic institution. There is no cause to go back to the old prejudices which made the people's interests subject to formal democracy. The Kadets scream: 'all power to the Constituent Assembly' but in fact this means 'all power to Kaledin.' We have to tell the people this and they will back us.

TROTSKY, making an unscheduled statement: On the night of [30 November to] 1 December a sharp conflict occurred between the Russian and German delegations at Brest over the question of [a pledge] not to transfer troops from the Eastern to the Western front. The Germans rejected [our] demand and proposed that during the armistice there should be no

transfers of units of divisional strength or more. The Russian delegation stated that this was unacceptable and referred the matter to the CPC. Lenin and I told the Russian delegation to insist on acceptance of its demands. I have just received a telegram to the effect that the Germans have accepted this point. Since this is the most essential point in the entire armistice negotiations, I can inform you that the armistice is a *fait accompli*.

LAPINSKI: The terror which the CPC is applying against the Kadets will in the nature of things be extended to parties standing to their left. The Constituent Assembly will be disrupted and with it the most noble aspirations of the people. Let me point out that all is not well as regards the most urgent matter of the moment, namely the conclusion of peace. There is nothing to show that the German proletariat is preparing to act against its government or that a democratic peace is a real possibility. If the broad masses do not obtain peace, or the land either, they will turn against us.

TROTSKY: Russia is completely split into two irreconcilable camps, that of the bourgeoisie and that of the proletariat. Between them are the Left SRs, who have yet to find their feet and are vacillating in a petty-bourgeois funk which leads them to obstruct the CPC's class struggle. There is nothing immoral in the proletariat finishing off a class that is collapsing: that is its right. You wax indignant at the naked terror which we are applying against our class enemies, but let me tell you that in one month's time at the most it will assume more frightful [*groznyye*] forms, modelled on the terror of the great French revolutionaries. Not the fortress but the guillotine will await our enemies. (*Cries from the left*: 'Your attitude to us is the same as Bleykhman's!') We have to drag along behind us [as if] on a lasso that party [the Left SRs] which keeps one ear cocked to whatever Chernov is saying, while Chernov is looking at Avksentyev and the latter is listening to Milyukov.

MSTISLAVSKY, for the Left SRs: It is not for the Left SRs to listen to reproaches from Trotsky or anybody else about their [alleged] 'petty-bourgeois' character. On the contrary, it is precisely this point that divides the Left SRs from the present Bolshevik leaders. It is no accident that Lenin and Trotsky should continually refer in their speeches to the great French revolution—a revolution that was bourgeois and petty-bourgeois in character. They do not realize that they are entangling themselves in the deepest contradictions here. They talk of a 'socialist' revolution yet in practice they are trapped in the narrow ring of purely bourgeois forms of political revolution. This is what gives the Left SRs the right to affirm that by thoughtlessly forcing [the pace] of revolution the Bolsheviks are taking the wrong road. Instead of making use of the freedom of action that has been granted them to undertake creative organic work, so establish new forms [of social life], the Bolsheviks, to quote Trotsky, are 'struggling to gain control of the state apparatus'. But in a situation where the class struggle has been sharpened to the point of bloodshed it is impossible to win command of the levers of the old state mechanism; indeed, this is unnecessary in so far as our revolution is a socialist one.

The only result of this 'struggle to gain control of the levers', to which Lenin and Trotsky give the form of political terror, is to distort the very essence of the class struggle, to make it degenerate into civil war, a war that is not justified by objective circumstances. Among the measures they take so blindly are repressive acts against the Constituent Assembly and the Kadet party as a whole. The Left SRs can never approve such measures, precisely because we are faithful to our notion of the class character of the revolution. The more acute the tension in the class struggle, the greater the assurance with which we can call the Constituent Assembly, for the less danger there will be of it diverting the people from accomplishing their social tasks by empty talk of 'the general national interest'. On the other hand, the CPC's fear of the assembly and of the Kadets, evident from its latest decrees, displays a bourgeois conception of revolution: the Bolsheviks are socialist in words, but their political practice is thoroughly bourgeois.

This difference prevents the Left SRs from following in the wake of the policy adopted by the ruling party. We agree with the Bolsheviks in our analysis of the essence of the current

revolution as a social one, and we stand firmly for soviet power, but we differ sharply from them in our view of the practical tasks to be accomplished, of the tactics suited to the present moment. In these critical times we do not consider ourselves entitled to separate ourselves from the mass movement, as the socialist parties of the right and centre have done. We [are determined to] share the people's difficulties and dangers. Faced with the fact of Bolshevism, which was not our creation, we shall exert all our efforts to minimize the harm it is doing to the revolutionary cause and to make use of it in the service of that cause. Whenever the occasion arises, before their intentions have become reality, we shall raise our voice in warning and try to prevent them taking the false step they have in mind. That is what we are doing today, with special vehemence and insistence, since the Bolshevik leaders are about to make a very big mistake.

In these protests Trotsky detects a lack of courage. In his view we are too prone to look back. On the contrary: if anything, we are looking too far ahead. We see that this great movement is taking the wrong road. And if we do not abandon the masses at this grim moment, but try instead to direct the movement back on to the right road, this is because it is our duty to fight alongside the people and not to forsake them even when they are on the wrong track. In such a matter we shall not listen to any voices calling to us from the other camp but shall hearken solely to the voice of our revolutionary conscience. (*Applause*). I table the following resolution:

Recognizing that the toiling masses can only define their attitude to the Constituent Assembly once that body has defined its own attitude to the questions of peace, land, government and workers' control; recognizing that any [measure] designed to prevent convocation of the Constituent Assembly, and to an even greater extent any efforts to disrupt or to dissolve it before it meets, will sow confusion among the toiling masses and give the bourgeoisie a dangerous weapon for its counter-revolutionary agitation; the CEC re-asserts to the CPC, for its unfailing compliance, [its will] that the Constituent Assembly should meet freely, in the presence of [all] its constituent elements, both socialist and bourgeois; recognizing further the necessity for fierce and merciless struggle against counter-revolution, however, the CEC permits the arrest of individuals or groups [of deputies] only on the basis of sufficient well-founded data leading to criminal prosecution.

In virtue of this, that part of the decree of 28 November which contradicts the principle indicated is hereby repealed. Furthermore, noting that this decree, like many others of general state significance, was published contrary to the statute of the CEC, without its sanction and even without its knowledge, the CEC ordains that in future only those governmental acts of general state character which have been confirmed by the CEC in plenary session shall have binding force.

[A spokesman for the PBS and for the Menshevik Internationalists follow. Neither speech has been recorded.]

SHTEYNBERG: It would be stupid to maintain that we are arguing in defence of the Kadets. Lenin and Trotsky are like the Right SRs and Mensheviks, enslaved by the idea that it is necessary to fight the Kadets. I call on our Bolshevik comrades to free themselves from their nightmare about Kadets. I should also like to point out that if decrees were passed through the CEC the people's commissars would not be obliged to squirm as they do.

In my view we should seek to turn the Constituent Assembly into a revolutionary Convention.

It is not true that you have to drag the Left SR party behind you [as if] with a lasso; it is rather that the Bolsheviks are dragging the revolution behind them. We have always been with the people, and shall work together with the Bolsheviks, but for this [collaboration to succeed] the two parties' views need to be fairly close.

By 150 votes to 98 with 3 abstentions the CEC adopts the Bolshevik formula for moving on to the next business [and resolves as follows]:



1. The CEC considers that the CPC's decision to convoke the Constituent Assembly once there are present in Petrograd 400 deputies who have shown their credentials is the most expedient way of ensuring that the assembly is convoked at the earliest moment.

2. Having heard the explanations given by CPC representatives of the decree declaring the Kadets to be a party of enemies of the people and authorizing the arrest of members of the directing organs of this party and supervision of it by the soviets; the CEC reasserts the need for the most resolute struggle against the counter-revolution headed by the Kadet party, which has launched a cruel civil war against the very foundations of the workers' and peasants' revolution.

[3.] The CEC assures the CPC also in future of its support [for measures taken] along these lines, and rejects the protests of political groups whose vacillations undermine the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry.

Keep, pp. 173-181. The symbols and notes employed by Keep to indicate the various sources used to assemble this account are not included here. The brackets in the text are by Keep. See Permissions page.



## ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

December 1 (14) 1917

*Lenin and most Bolshevik leaders strongly favored centralized direction of the economy. Although some of the early measures, such as workers' control (see above, November 14), pointed toward a decentralized economy, the main thrust was toward central leadership and control. The Council was created to provide this, and was given sweeping responsibility to make plans for and to regulate "the economic life of the country." This institution is also often referred to as the Supreme Economic Council as well as by its Russian initials, VSNKh, and as Vesenkha.*

### DECREE ON THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

1. The Supreme Council of the National Economy is established and attached to the Soviet of People's Commissars.

2. The task of the Supreme Council of the National Economy is the organisation of the national economy and state finances. As a result the Supreme Council of the National Economy will prepare general norms and plans for the regulation of the economic life of the country and co-ordinate and unify the activities of the local and central regulating organs (committees on fuel, metals, transport, food supply committee and others) that are attached to the People's Commissariats (trade and industry, food, agriculture, finance, army and navy, etc.), the All-Russian Soviet of Workers' Control, the factory committees, and the trade unions.

3. The Supreme Council of the National Economy has the power to confiscate, requisition, sequester, and amalgamate various branches of industry, commerce, and other enterprises in the field of production, distribution and state finance.

4. The Supreme Council of the National Economy is to take charge of all existing institutions for the regulation of economic life and has the right to reorganise them.

5. The Supreme Council of the National Economy is to be composed of representatives of (a) the All-Russian Soviet of Workers' Control as constituted by the decree of 27 November 1917 (b) representatives of the Commissariats and (c) experts without a vote.

6. The Supreme Council of the National Economy is divided into sections and departments (fuel, metal, demobilisation, finance, etc.). The number of the sections and departments and their respective functions are to be determined at a general meeting of the Supreme Council of the National Economy.

7. The different departments of the Supreme Council of the National Economy regulate the specific branches of the national economy and prepare measures for the respective people's commissariats.

8. The Supreme Council of the National Economy shall appoint from its own members a bureau of fifteen persons to co-ordinate the work of the different sections and departments and to solve the problems that need immediate attention.

9. All draft laws and important proposals affecting the economic life of the country as a whole are to be set before the Council of People's Commissars via the Supreme Council of the National Economy.

10. The Supreme Council of the National Economy co-ordinates and directs the work of the local economic departments of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, including the local organs of Workers' Control, as well as local agencies of the Commissariat of Labour, Trade and Industry, Food, etc.

If the local agencies referred to above do not yet exist, the Supreme Council of the National Economy shall organise its own.

All the decisions of the Supreme Council of the National Economy are binding on the economic departments of the local soviets as agents of the Supreme Council of the National Economy.

McCauley, pp. 230-232.



## ARMISTICE BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE CENTRAL POWERS

December 2 (15) 1917

*Failing any response from the Allied governments to its earlier calls, the Soviet government entered into a separate armistice with Germany and the Central Powers. Hope remained that the Allies would yet join the peace talks, and both general appeals to Allied public opinion and approaches to Allied diplomats and other representatives followed the armistice. The armistice was a major step, however, in bringing the peace so needed by the Bolsheviks or any government hoping to rally popular support.*

## ARMISTICE, CONCLUDED AT BREST-LITOVSK

### I.

The armistice begins on 17 December, 1917, at noon (4 December, 1917, at fourteen o'clock, Russian time) and extends until 14 January, 1918, noon (1 January, 1918, fourteen o'clock, Russian time). The contracting parties have the right on the twenty-first day of the armistice to give a seven days' notice of termination; such not being done, the armistice automatically remains in force until one of the contracting parties gives such seven days' notice.

### II.

The armistice applies to all land and air fighting forces of the said Powers on the land front between the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea. In the Russo-Turkish theaters of war in Asia the armistice goes into effect at the same time.

The contracting parties obligate themselves, during the period of the armistice, neither to augment the number of detachments of troops stationed on the said fronts and on the islands of Moon Sound—this applies also to their organization and status—nor to attempt any regroupings in preparation for an offensive.

Further, the contracting parties obligate themselves not to undertake any transfers of troops until 14 January, 1918 (1 January, 1918, Russian time), on the front between the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea, unless such transfers had already been begun at the moment of the signing of the armistice.

Finally, the contracting parties obligate themselves not to assemble any troops in the harbors of the Baltic Sea east of 15° longitude east of Greenwich and in the harbors of the Black Sea during the period of the armistice.

### III.

The advance entanglements of each party's position will be considered as demarcation lines on the European front. These lines may be crossed only under the conditions noted in IV.

In places where entrenched positions do not exist, the demarcation lines for each side will be a straight line drawn through the most advanced occupied positions. The space between the two lines will be considered neutral ground. Likewise, navigable rivers separating the opposing positions will be neutral and closed to navigation, except in case of commercial shipping agreed upon. For sections in which the positions are widely separated it will devolve upon the Armistice Commission (VII) to determine and establish the lines of demarcation.

In the Russo-Turkish theaters of war in Asia, the lines of demarcation, as well as intercourse through them (IV), are to be determined by agreement of the division commanders of both sides.

### IV.

For the development and strengthening of the friendly relations between the peoples of the contracting parties, organized intercourse between the troops is permitted under the following conditions:

1. Intercourse is permitted parlementaires and the members of the Armistice Commission (VII) and their representatives. All such must have passes signed by at least a corps commander or a corps committee.

2. In each section of a Russian division organized intercourse may take place at two to three places.

For this purpose, by agreement of the divisions opposed to each other, centers of intercourse are to be established in the neutral zone between the demarcation lines and are to be distinguished by white flags. Intercourse is permissible only by day from sunrise to sunset.

At the centers of intercourse not more than twenty-five unarmed persons belonging to either side may be present at any one time. The exchange of news and newspapers is allowed. Open letters may be passed for dispatch. The sale and exchange of wares of everyday use is permitted at the centers of intercourse.

3. The interment of the dead in the neutral zone is permitted. The special details in each case are to be agreed upon by the divisional commanders on either side or their ranking officers.

4. The question of the return of dismissed soldiers of one country whose domiciles be beyond the demarcation lines of the other country, can be decided only at the peace negotiations. This applies also to the members of Polish detachments.

5. All persons who—contrary to the agreements 1-4 preceding—cross the demarcation lines of the opposing party will be arrested and not released until the conclusion of peace or the denunciation of the armistice.

The contracting parties obligate themselves to bring to the notice of their troops by strict orders and detailed explanation the necessity for the observance of the conditions of intercourse and the consequences of infraction thereof.

## V.

With regard to naval warfare the following conditions are agreed upon:

1. The armistice extends to the whole of the Black Sea and to the Baltic Sea east of 15° longitude east of Greenwich, and to all the naval and air forces of the contracting parties within these regions.

Regarding the question of the armistice in the White Sea and in the Russian coastal waters of the northern Arctic Ocean, a special agreement will be entered into by the German and Russian naval high commands after mutual consultation. Attacks of either party upon mercantile and war vessels in the above-named waters shall cease from now on as far as possible.

In this special agreement shall be included provisions to prevent, as far as possible, the naval forces of the contracting parties from engaging each other on other seas.

2. Attacks by sea and by air upon ports and coasts belonging to one of the contracting parties will be discontinued by both sides on all seas. Similarly, naval forces belonging to one party are forbidden to enter the harbors and approach the coasts occupied by the other party.

3. Flights over the ports and coasts of one of the contracting parties as well as over demarcation lines are forbidden upon all seas to the other party.

4. The demarcation lines run as follows: a) in the Black Sea, from Olinka-Lighthouse (St. Georges mouth) to Cape Jeros (Trebizond), b) in the Baltic Sea, from Rogekuel on the West Coast to Worms to Bogskaer to Svenska to Hoegarne. The more detailed determination of the line between Worms and Bogskaer is delegated to the Armistice Commission for the Baltic Sea (VII, 1,) subject to the stipulation that the Russian warships are granted free passage to the Aaland Islands in all states of the weather and ice conditions. The Russian naval forces may not pass the demarcation lines to the south, the naval forces of the four Allied Powers to the north.

The Russian Government guarantees that the naval forces of the Entente which at the beginning of the armistice are situated, or which later may arrive, north of the demarcation lines will conduct themselves as provided for the Russian naval forces.

5. Commerce and commercial shipping in the sea regions indicated under paragraph 1 is unrestrained. The establishment of all regulations for commerce as well as the publication of unrestricted lanes for merchant vessels are delegated to the Armistice Commission for the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea (VII, 1 and 7).

6. The contracting parties engage, during the duration of the armistice on the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea, not to undertake preparations for naval offensive warfare on the high seas.

## VI.

To prevent disturbances and misunderstandings on the front, infantry firing practice nearer than five kilometers, artillery firing practice nearer than fifteen kilometers, behind the fronts is prohibited.

Mine warfare on land is to cease completely.

Aerial fighting forces and captive balloons must be kept outside an air zone of ten kilometers behind the respective demarcation lines.

Work upon positions behind the advanced wire entanglements is permitted, but not such work as may serve as preparation for attack.

## VII.

With inception of the armistice the following "Armistice Commissions" (composed of representatives of each nation fighting on the section of the front in question) will assemble,

before which all military questions regarding the execution of the provisions of the armistice in the territories in question are to be laid. 1. Riga, for the Baltic Sea; 2. Dvinsk, for the front from the Baltic Sea to the Disna; 3. Brest-Litovsk, for the front from the Disna to the Pripet; 4. Berditschew, for the front from the Pripet to the Dniester; 5. Koloszvar, and 6. Focsani, for the front from the Dniester to the Black Sea, the boundaries between the two Commissions 5 and 6 to be fixed by mutual agreement; 7. Odessa, for the Black Sea.

Direct and uncontrolled telegraph lines to the home countries of their members will be placed at the disposal of these Commissions. The lines will be constructed by the respective army commands in their respective countries, as far as midway between the demarcation lines. In the Russo-Turkish theaters of war in Asia similar Commissions will be established in accordance with agreements reached by the commanders-in-chief on both sides.

#### VIII.

The treaty concerning cessation of hostilities of 5 December (22 November), 1917, and all agreements concluded up to this time on separate sectors of the front with regard to cessation of hostilities or an armistice are rendered null and void by this Armistice Treaty.

#### IX.

The contracting parties will enter into peace negotiations immediately after the signature of the present Armistice Treaty.

#### X.

Upon the basis of the principle of the freedom, independence, and territorial inviolability of the neutral Persian State, the Turkish and the Russian Supreme Commands are prepared to withdraw their troops from Persia. They will immediately enter into communication with the Persian Government, in order to regulate the details of the evacuation and the other necessary measures for the guaranteeing of the above-mentioned principle.

#### XI.

Each contracting party is to receive a copy of the agreement in the German and Russian languages, signed by representatives with plenipotentiary powers.

Brest-Litovsk, the 15th day of December, 1917. (The 2nd day of December 1917, Russian style).

(Signatures follow)

*Texts of the Russian "Peace", pp. 1-7.*



#### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHEKA

December 7 (20) 1917

*The combination of opposition from various quarters, Lenin's intolerance of such opposition, and a tendency to view the world in somewhat apocalyptic terms of inevitable conflict, all contributed to the revival of a political police. The first document given here is a note from Lenin which contains his proposed draft of a decree for taking special measures against "counter-revolutionaries and saboteurs". As was typical of many of his writings, it grew out of a specific event—in this case non-cooperation by government and white collar employees opposing the regime—but laid the foundation for a much more sweeping policy. Here it resulted in the*

*creation of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for the Struggle with Counter-Revolution and Sabotage, generally known as the "Cheka". It quickly evolved far beyond the modest activities outlined here, becoming the main agency for repression and terror activities in Russia. This was the origin of the secret, or political, police which, in various names, has been a major feature of the Soviet system since that time. Dzerzhinsky, a Polish Bolshevik, was the first head of the Cheka. The second document given below is the resolution of the Council of People's Commissars, as reported in Pravda; this rather than a formal decree apparently established the Cheka.*

[I. Lenin to Dzerzhinsky]

To Comrade Dzerzhinsky,

Further to your report today on measures for fighting saboteurs and counter-revolutionaries, would it not be possible to submit a decree *like the following?*

*On Fighting Counter-Revolutionaries and Saboteurs*

The bourgeoisie, the landowners and all the rich classes are making desperate efforts to undermine the revolution, the aim of which is to safeguard the interests of the workers, the working and exploited masses.

The bourgeoisie are prepared to commit the most heinous crimes; they are bribing the outcast and degraded elements of society and plying them with drink to use them in riots. The supporters of the bourgeoisie, particularly among the higher clerical staff, bank officials, and so on, are sabotaging their work, and are organising strikes to thwart the government's measures for the realisation of socialist reforms. They have even gone so far as to sabotage food distribution, thereby menacing millions of people with famine.

Urgent measures are necessary to fight the counter-revolutionaries and saboteurs. In virtue of this, the Council of People's Commissars decrees:

(1) Persons belonging to the wealthy classes (i.e., with incomes of 500 rubles or more per month, and owners of urban real estate, stocks and shares, or money amounting to over 1000 rubles), and also all employees of banks, joint-stock companies, state and public institutions, shall within three days present to their house committees written statements in three copies over their own signatures and indicating their address, income, place of employment and their occupation.

(2) The house committees shall countersign these statements, retain one copy and send one copy to the municipality and another to the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (address:...).

(3) Persons guilty of contravening the present law (failing to submit statements, giving false information, etc.) and members of house committees infringing the regulations governing the collection, filing and presentation of these statements to the institutions mentioned above shall be liable to a fine of up to 5000 rubles for each infringement, or to imprisonment up to one year, or shall be sent to the front, depending on the nature of the offence.

(4) Persons sabotaging the work of, or declining to work in, banks, state and public institutions, joint-stock companies, railways, etc., shall be liable to similar punishment.

(5) As a first step towards universal labour conscription, it is decreed that the persons referred to in §1 shall be obliged, first, constantly to carry with them a copy of the above-mentioned statement certified by the house committees and by their chiefs or elected officials (factory committees, food committees, railway committees, employees' trade unions, etc.); the certificates must indicate what public service or work is being performed by the individual in question, or whether he is living with his family as a disabled member thereof, etc.

(6) Secondly, such persons shall be obliged to acquire, within one week from the promulgation of the present law, worker-consumer books (specimen attached), in which their weekly income and expenditures shall be entered, together with the public duties performed by the individual in question, certified by the proper committees or institutions.

(7) Persons who do not come under §1 shall present to their house committees a statement in one copy of their income and place of employment and shall carry another copy of this statement certified by the house committee.

## [II. Action of the Council of People's Commissars]

The Commission is to be called the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for the Struggle with Counter-Revolution and Sabotage and is to be attached to the Council of People's Commissars.

The duties of the Commission are to be as follows:

1. To investigate and nullify all acts of counter-revolution and sabotage throughout Russia, irrespective of origin.

2. To bring before the Revolutionary Tribunal all counter-revolutionaries and saboteurs and to work out measures to combat them.

3. The Commission is to conduct the preliminary investigation only, sufficient to suppress (the counter-revolutionary act). The Commission is to be divided into sections: (1) the information (section) (2) The organisation section (in charge of organising the struggle with counter-revolution throughout Russia) with branches, and (3) the fighting section.

The Commission shall be set up finally tomorrow. Then the fighting section of the All-Russian Commission shall start its activities. The Commission shall keep an eye on the press, saboteurs, right Socialist Revolutionaries and strikers. Measures to be taken are confiscation, imprisonment, confiscation of cards, publication of the names of the enemies of the people, etc.

Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, V. Ulyanov (Lenin)

First document from Lenin, Vol. 26, pp. 374-376; second document from McCauley, pp. 181-182.



## LENIN'S THESES ON THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

December 11 or 12 (24 or 25) 1917

*The Constituent Assembly, elections to which gave a clear majority to his opponents, was a threat to everything Lenin had fought for so hard and for so long. Moreover, even within the Bolshevik Party, especially among the delegates to the Assembly, there was strong sentiment that the party must honor the electoral wishes of the people and must allow the Assembly to work. Lenin, who had been advancing arguments against the Assembly in various forums, now marshalled them in a set of theses to be presented first to the Central Committee and then to the Bolshevik delegates to the Assembly. In them he advances a variety of arguments as to why the Assembly could be dismissed. Lenin's theses carried the Bolsheviks' meeting of December 12 and became the theoretical basis for the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly a month later (see below, January 6).*

V.I. Lenin

### *Theses on the Constituent Assembly*

1. The demand for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly was a perfectly legitimate part of the programme of revolutionary Social-Democracy, because in a bourgeois republic the Constituent Assembly represents the highest form of democracy and because, in setting up a Pre-parliament, the imperialist republic headed by Kerensky was preparing to rig the elections and violate democracy in a number of ways.

2. While demanding the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, revolutionary Social-Democracy has ever since the beginning of the Revolution of 1917 repeatedly emphasised that a republic of Soviets is a higher form of democracy than the usual bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly.

3. For the transition from the bourgeois to the socialist system, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Republic of Soviets (of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies) is not only a higher type of democratic institution (as compared with the usual bourgeois republic crowned by a Constituent Assembly), but is the only form capable of securing the most painless transition to socialism.

4. The convocation of the Constituent Assembly in our revolution on the basis of lists submitted in the middle of October 1917 is taking place under conditions which preclude the possibility of the elections to this Constituent Assembly faithfully expressing the will of the people in general and of the working people in particular.

5. Firstly, proportional representation results in a faithful expression of the will of the people only when the party lists correspond to the real division of the people according to the party groupings reflected in those lists. In our case, however, as is well known, the party which from May to October had the largest number of followers among the people, and especially among the peasants—the Socialist-Revolutionary Party—came out with united election lists for the Constituent Assembly in the middle of October 1917, but split in November 1917, after the elections and before the Assembly met.

For this reason, there is not, nor can there be, even a formal correspondence between the will of the mass of the electors and the composition of the elected Constituent Assembly.

6. Secondly, a still more important, not a formal nor legal, but a socio-economic, class source of the discrepancy between the will of the people, and especially the will of the working classes, on the one hand, and the composition of the Constituent Assembly, on the other, is due to the elections to the Constituent Assembly having taken place at a time when the overwhelming majority of the people could not yet know the full scope and significance of the October, Soviet, proletarian-peasant revolution, which began on October 25, 1917, i.e., after the lists of candidates for the Constituent Assembly had been submitted.

7. The October Revolution is passing through successive stages of development before our very eyes, winning power for the Soviets and wresting political rule from the bourgeoisie and transferring it to the proletariat and poor peasantry.

8. It began with the victory of October 24-25 in the capital, when the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the vanguard of the proletarians and of the most politically active section of the peasants, gave a majority to the Bolshevik Party and put it in power.

9. Then, in the course of November and December, the revolution spread to the entire army and peasants, this being expressed first of all in the deposition of the old leading bodies (army committees, gubernia peasant committees, the Central Executive Committee of the All-Russia Soviet of Peasants' Deputies, etc.)—which expressed the superseded, compromising phase of the revolution, its bourgeois, and not proletarian, phase, and which were therefore inevitably bound to disappear under the pressure of the deeper and broader masses of the people—and in the election of new leading bodies in their place.

10. This mighty movement of the exploited people for the reconstruction of the leading bodies of their organisations has not ended even now, in the middle of December 1917, and the Railwaymen's Congress, which is still in session, represents one of its stages.

11. Consequently, the grouping of the class forces in Russia in the course of their class struggle is in fact assuming, in November and December 1917, a form differing in principle from the one that the party lists of candidates for the Constituent Assembly compiled in the middle of October 1917 could have reflected.

12. Recent events in the Ukraine (partly also in Finland and Byelorussia, as well as in the Caucasus) point similarly to a regrouping of class forces which is taking place in the



process of the struggle between the bourgeois nationalism of the Ukrainian Rada, the Finnish Diet, etc., on the one hand, and Soviet power, the proletarian-peasant revolution in each of these national republics, on the other.

13. Lastly, the civil war which was started by the Cadet-Kaledin counter-revolutionary revolt against the Soviet authorities, against the workers' and peasants' government, has finally brought the class struggle to a head and has destroyed every change of setting in a formally democratic way the very acute problems with which history has confronted the peoples of Russia, and in the first place her working class and peasants.

14. Only the complete victory of the workers and peasants over the bourgeois and landowner revolt (as expressed in the Cadet-Kaledin movement), only the ruthless military suppression of this revolt of the slave-owners can really safeguard the proletarian-peasant revolution. The course of events and the development of the class struggle in the revolution have resulted in the slogan "All Power to the Constituent Assembly!"—which disregards the gains of the workers' and peasants' revolution, which disregards Soviet power, which disregards the decisions of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, of the Second All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies, etc.—*becoming in fact* the slogan of the Cadets and the Kaledinites and of their helpers. The entire people are now fully aware that the Constituent Assembly, if it parted ways with Soviet power, would inevitably be doomed to political extinction.

15. One of the particularly acute problems of national life is the problem of peace. A really revolutionary struggle for peace began in Russia only after the victory of the October 25 Revolution, and the first fruits of this victory were the publication of the secret treaties, the conclusion of an armistice, and the beginning of open negotiations for a general peace without annexations and indemnities.

Only now are the broad sections of the people actually receiving a chance fully and openly to observe the policy of revolutionary struggle for peace and to study its results.

At the time of the elections to the Constituent Assembly the mass of the people had no such chance.

It is clear that the discrepancy between the composition of the elected Constituent Assembly and the actual will of the people on the question of terminating the war is inevitable from this point of view too.

16. The result of all the above-mentioned circumstances taken together is that the Constituent Assembly, summoned on the basis of the election lists of the parties existing prior to the proletarian-peasant revolution under the rule of the bourgeoisie, must inevitably clash with the will and interests of the working and exploited classes which on October 25 began the socialist revolution against the bourgeoisie. Naturally, the interests of this revolution stand higher than the formal rights of the Constituent Assembly, even if those formal rights were not undermined by the absence in the law on the Constituent Assembly of a provision recognising the right of the people to recall their deputies and hold new elections at any moment.

17. Every direct or indirect attempt to consider the question of the Constituent Assembly from a formal, legal point of view, within the framework of ordinary bourgeois democracy and disregarding the class struggle and civil war, would be a betrayal of the proletariat's cause, and the adoption of the bourgeois standpoint. The revolutionary Social-Democrats are duty bound to warn all and sundry against this error, into which a few Bolshevik leaders, who have been unable to appreciate the significance of the October uprising and the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat, have strayed.

18. The only chance of securing a painless solution to the crisis which has arisen owing to the divergence between the elections to the Constituent Assembly, on the one hand, and the will of the people and the interests of the working and exploited classes, on the other,

is for the people to exercise as broadly and as rapidly as possible the right to elect the members of the Constituent Assembly anew, and for the Constituent Assembly to accept the law of the Central Executive Committee on these new elections, to proclaim that it unreservedly recognises Soviet power, the Soviet revolution, and its policy on the questions of peace, the land and workers' control, and to resolutely join the camp of the enemies of the Cadet-Kaledin counter-revolution.

19. Unless these conditions are fulfilled, the crisis in connection with the Constituent Assembly can be settled only in a revolutionary way, by Soviet power adopting the most energetic, speedy, firm and determined revolutionary measures against the Cadet-Kaledin counter-revolution, no matter behind what slogans and institutions (even participation in the Constituent Assembly) this counter-revolution may hide. Any attempt to tie the hands of Soviet power in this struggle would be tantamount to aiding counter-revolution.

Lenin, Vol. 26, pp. 379-383.



## NATIONALIZATION OF BANKS

December 14 (27) 1917

*Both pressing political and economic problems and an ideological commitment to socialism insured that measures to take over the banks would be high priorities of the new regime. Indeed, this was one of the few specific economic measures given in pre-revolutionary Bolshevik doctrine. Control of banking and finance was essential to Bolshevik control of the economy, and this initial decree was followed by several supplementary ones. Armed detachments were sent to banks to enforce the decree.*

### DECREE ON THE NATIONALIZATION OF THE BANKS

In the interests of the regular organisation of the national economy, in the interests of the thorough eradication of bank speculation and of the complete freeing of the workers, peasants and whole labouring population from the exploitation of banking capital and with the object of establishing one single national bank of the Russian Republic which shall serve the interests of the people and the poorer classes, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee resolves:

- (1) Banking is to be a State monopoly.
- (2) All existing private joint stock banks and banking offices are merged into the State Bank.
- (3) The assets and liabilities of the businesses to be liquidated are taken over by the State Bank.
- (4) The order of the merger of the private banks in the State Bank will be determined by a separate decree.
- (5) The temporary direction of the affairs of the private banks is transferred to the Board of the State Bank.
- (6) The interests of the small depositors will be fully safeguarded.

Astrov, Vol. 2, p. 474.

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND ABOLITION OF RANKS IN THE ARMY

December 16 (29) 1917

*Removal of unpopular officers began soon after the February Revolution, and de facto approval of officers by army committees was widespread by fall of 1917. This process reached full development in this decree of the Council of People's Commissars which provided for election of commanders and recognizing the power of the elected army committees. Another decree the same day abolished all ranks in the army. With the buildup of the Red Army in 1918 the appointive principle and ranks were reintroduced, but only after hard debate and strenuous opposition from many Bolshevik leaders concerned with military affairs.*

## I

DECREE ON THE ELECTORAL BASIS AND ORGANIZATION OF  
AUTHORITY IN THE ARMY

1. The army, at the service of the will of the working people, is subject to the supreme expression of that will—the Council of People's Commissars.

2. Within the limits of each military unit and those attached to it, full authority belongs to the corresponding soldiers' committees and councils.

3. Areas of the life and activities of the troops already under the jurisdiction of committees will now be directly subject to their management. Control by committees and councils is to be established over those branches of activity which cannot arrange committees for themselves.

4. The principle of electing the command and official personnel is introduced. The command, up to and including the commanders of regiments, are elected by a general vote of their squads, platoons, companies, squadrons, batteries, divisions, and regiments. Commanders higher than a regimental commander, up to and including the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, are elected by the appropriate congresses or boards in connection with the appropriate committees.

Note—By the term congress is to be understood a meeting of the appropriate committee with delegates from the committees standing one degree lower.

5. The next highest committee confirms the election of commanders higher than regimental commanders.

Note—In the event of the higher committee giving a considered refusal to confirm the commander elected by the lower committee, confirmation of the commander is obligatory if he is elected the second time by the appropriate committee.

6. Commanders of armies are elected at army congresses. Commanders at the front are elected by congresses of the front.

7. To positions of a technical character, demanding special training, special knowledge, or other practical preparation, such as those of doctors, engineers, technical workers, telegraphists, radio-telegraphists, airmen, chauffeurs, etc., only those persons having the special knowledge required are to be nominated by the appropriate committees of the special units.

8. Staff commanders are elected at congresses of persons with special training.

9. All other members of the staff are to be nominated by the staff commanders and confirmed by the appropriate congress.

Note—All persons with specialized education are to be on a special list.

10. Commanders above the call-up age of soldiers and who are not elected to these or other duties, and therefore are reduced to the rank of private, are given the right to retire.

11. All other offices not included in the command, with the exception of offices in the economic sections, are filled by nomination by the elected commander.

12. Detailed instructions on the election of the command will be given separately.

## II

## DECREE ON EQUALITY OF RIGHTS FOR ALL SERVING IN THE ARMY

In pursuance of the will of the revolutionary people for the immediate and decisive destruction of all remaining elements of the former system of inequality in the army, the Council of People's Commissars decrees:

1. All ranks and titles in the army, beginning with corporal and ending with general, are abolished. The army of the Russian Republic henceforth consists of free citizens, equal one to another, bearing the honorable title of soldiers of the revolutionary army.

2. All prerogatives connected with former ranks and titles, together with all distinctions of uniform, are abolished.

3. All employment of title is abolished.

4. All orders and other differentiating marks are abolished.

5. With the abolition of the rank of officer are abolished all separate officers' organizations.

6. The custom of having orderlies in the active army is abolished.

Note—The employment of orderlies is confined to regimental chancelleries, committees, and other organizations of the corps.

*Daily Review of the Foreign Press*, February 22, 1918, pp. 418-419, with modifications by the editor.



## DECREE ON DIVORCE

December 16 (29) 1917

*One of the social policies which the Bolsheviks quickly implemented was to provide for quick and simple divorce, in contrast to the difficult procedures of Imperial Russia. Secularization of divorce, taking it from the hands of the Orthodox Church, was also part of the general policy to reduce the Church's role and influence in society. The decree, issued by the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, was later embodied in the general civil law code.*

## DECREE ON DIVORCE

1. A marriage is to be annulled when either both parties or one at least apply for its annulment.

2. Such application is to be made to the local court, in accordance with the regulations of local administration.

Note.—Announcement of dissolution of marriage, where arranged by mutual consent, may be made direct to the marriage registration office, where the original entry of the marriage is preserved; this office is to enter the annulment of the marriage in its register and to issue a certificate to that effect.

3. On the day fixed for the hearing of the application the local judge will summon both parties or their representatives.

4. If the whereabouts of one of the parties liable to summons be unknown, the application for annulment of marriage is allowed, provided the applicant states the last known address of the absent party, or both the applicant's own address and the last known address of the defendant.

5. If the whereabouts of one of the parties liable to summons be unknown, the date for the hearing of the case is to be fixed not less than two months after the day on which the court-summons has been published in the Gazette of the local administration, and notification is to be sent to the defendant's last known address as provided by the applicant.

6. When the judge has convinced himself that the application for annulment of marriage has been made by both parties or by one of them, he shall of his own authority declare the marriage void and issue a certificate to that effect. He shall also convey a copy of his decision to the marriage registration office where the marriage was originally concluded and where the files containing the original entry of the marriage are preserved.

7. Where a marriage is annulled by mutual consent both parties must include in the declaration which they submit a statement of the surnames they and their children propose to use. Where a marriage is annulled on the appeal of one of the parties, and agreement between the parties on the subject cannot be obtained, the divorced parties shall reassume the surnames used by them before their marriage, while the surname of their children is to be decided upon by the judge, or—where the parties fail to agree—by the local court.

8. In cases of divorce by mutual consent the judge, when declaring the marriage dissolved, shall decide which of the parents is to keep the children born during the marriage where they are not of age, and which of the two parties shall provide for the maintenance and education of the children and to what extent, as well as whether and in what degree the husband shall provide for the maintenance and upkeep of his divorced wife.

9. If consent is lacking, the husband's share in providing for the maintenance and upkeep of his divorced wife in the event of her being destitute or without private means and unable to work, as well as the allocation of the children, shall be decided upon in the general order of suits by the local court independent of the amount of the suit. Having of his own authority declared the marriage dissolved the judge shall, pending the final settlement of the suit, temporarily decide the fate of the children and also determine the temporary maintenance of the children and of the wife, if she require it.

10. Suits relating to the annulment and invalidation of marriages shall henceforth be heard in the local courts.

11. This law shall bind all citizens of the Russian Republic irrespective of their religious denomination.

12. All suits relating to the annulment of marriage now under consideration by the religious consistories of the Orthodox Church and other faiths, by the Governing Synod and by any departments of other Christian and non-Christian denominations and by responsible persons in the administration of the affairs of the various denominations, which have not yet been decided or in which the decisions have not yet been put into legal force, are by virtue of this law declared invalid and are to be transferred to the local district courts together with all files to be found in the marriage-divorce departments of the above-mentioned institutions and with the above-mentioned persons.

The parties concerned shall have the right to submit a new appeal for the annulment of marriage under the provisions of this law, without waiting for their previous suit to be terminated; moreover, renewed public notification to absent parties (see paragraphs 4 and 5) shall be deemed unnecessary where such has already been made under the old order.

Schlesinger, *The Family*, pp. 30-32, with modification by the editor.

## MARRIAGE, CHILDREN, AND CIVIL REGISTRATION

December 18 (31) 1917

*These measures were part of the secularizing and social revolution policies of the new regime. In addition to providing for civil ceremonies and registration, this decree issued by the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, also introduced several important new social policies, such as equal rights for children born out of wedlock and allowing a choice of family names for wives and children.*

## DECREE CONCERNING MARRIAGE, CHILDREN, AND CIVIL REGISTRATION

The Russian Republic henceforth recognizes civil marriage only. Civil marriage is performed on the basis of the following rules:

1. Persons who wish to contract marriage declare their intention orally or by a written statement to the department of registration of marriages and births to the city hall (regional, district, township) authorities according to the place of their residence. *Note:* Church marriage is a private affair of those contracting it, while civil marriage is obligatory.

2. Declarations of intention to contract marriage are not accepted (a) from persons of the male sex younger than eighteen years, and of the female sex, sixteen years of age; in Transcaucasia the native inhabitants may enter into marriage upon attaining the age of sixteen for the groom and thirteen for the bride; (b) from relatives in the direct line, full and half-brothers and sisters; consanguinity is recognized also between a child born out of wedlock and his descendants on one side and relatives on the other; (c) from married persons, and (d) from insane.

3. Those wishing to contract marriage appear at the department of registration of marriages and sign a statement concerning the absence of the obstacles to contracting marriage enumerated in Article 2 of this decree, and also a statement that they contract marriage voluntarily. Those guilty of deliberately making false statements about the absence of the obstacles enumerated in Article 2 are criminally prosecuted for false statements and the marriage is declared invalid.

4. Upon the signing of the above-mentioned statement, the director of the department of registration of marriages records the act of marriage in the book of marriage registries and then declares the marriage to have become legally effective. When contracting marriage the parties are allowed to decide freely whether they will henceforth be called by the surname of the husband or wife or by a combined surname.

As proof of the act of marriage, the contracting parties immediately receive a copy of the certificate of their marriage. *Note:* A model form of the book of marriage registries is appended.

5. Complaints against the refusal to perform marriage or incorrect registration are lodged, without limitation of time, with the local judge in the locality of the department of registration of marriage; the ruling of the local judge on such complaint may be appealed in the usual way.

6. In case the former books of registration of marriages have been destroyed, or lost in some other way, or if for some other cause married persons cannot obtain a certificate of their marriage, those persons are given the right to submit a declaration to the respective department of registration of marriages, according to the place of residence of both parties or one of them, to the effect that they have been in the state of wedlock since such and such time. Such declaration is attested, in addition to the statement stipulated by Article 3, by a further statement of the parties that the book of registration has really been lost or that for some other sufficient cause they cannot obtain a copy of the certificate.

7. The registration of the birth of a child is made by the same department of registration of marriages and births in the place of residence of the mother, and a special entry of each

birth is made in the book of registration of births. *Note:* A model form of the book of registration of births is appended.

8. The birth of a child must be reported to the department either by his parents or one of them, or by the persons in whose care, because of the death of his parents, the child remained, with an indication of the name and surname adopted for the child and the presentation of two witnesses to attest the fact of birth.

9. The books of registration of marriages as well as the books of registration of births are kept in two copies, and one copy is sent at the end of the year to the proper court for preservation.

10. Children born out of wedlock are on an equality with those born in wedlock with regard to the rights and duties of parents toward children, and likewise of children toward parents. The persons who make a declaration and give a signed statement to that effect are registered as the father and mother of the child. Those guilty of deliberately making false statements regarding the above are criminally prosecuted for false testimony and the registration is declared invalid. In case the father of a child born out of wedlock does not make such a declaration, the mother of the child or the guardian or the child itself has the right to prove fatherhood by legal means.

#### *Registration of Deaths*

11. The record of the death of a person is made in the place where the death occurred by the department which has charge of the registration of marriages and births, by entry in a special book for registration of deaths. *Note:* A model form of a book for registration of deaths is appended.

12. The death of a person must be reported to the department by the legal or administrative authorities or persons in whose care the deceased was.

13. Institutions in charge of cemeteries are henceforth forbidden to place obstacles in the way of the burial on cemetery grounds in accordance with the ritual of civil funerals.

14. All religious and administrative institutions which hitherto have had charge of the registration of marriages, births, and deaths according to the customs of any religious cult, are ordered to transfer immediately all their registration books to the respective municipal, district, rural and Zemstvo administrations.

*The Nation*, December 28, 1918, p. 824, with modifications by the editor.



### REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL OF THE PRESS

December 18 (31) 1917

*Despite the furor which accompanied the initiation of press censorship, the government established a special tribunal for "crimes and offenses against the people committed by means of the press", separate from the People's Courts (see above, November 22) and the Revolutionary Tribunals being established at the same time (see following document, December 19). This tribunal was established by order of the People's Commissar of Justice. The vague definition of what was a crime, such as is found in paragraph two, became typical of Soviet law.*

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL OF THE PRESS

1. Under the Revolutionary Tribunal is created a Revolutionary Tribunal of the Press. This Tribunal will have jurisdiction of crimes and offences against the people committed by means of the press.

2. Crimes and offences by means of the press are the publication and circulation of any false or perverted reports and information about events of public life, in so far as they constitute an attempt upon the rights and interests of the revolutionary people.

3. The Revolutionary Tribunal of the Press consists of three members, elected for a period not longer than three months by the Soviet of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. These members are charged with the conduct of the preliminary investigation as well as the trial of the case.

4. The following serve as grounds for instituting proceedings: reports of legal or administrative institutions, public organizations, or private persons.

5. The prosecution and defence are conducted on the principles laid down in the instructions to the general Revolutionary Tribunal.

6. The sessions of the Revolutionary Tribunal of the Press are public.

7. The decisions of the Revolutionary Tribunal of the Press are final and are not subject to appeal.

8. The Revolutionary Tribunal imposes the following penalties: (1) fine, (2) expression of public censure, which the convicted organ of the Press brings to the general knowledge in a way indicated by the Tribunal, (3) the publication in a prominent place or in a special edition of a denial of the false report, (4) temporary or permanent suppression of the publication or its exclusion from circulation, (5) confiscation to national ownership of the printing shop or property of the organ of the Press if it belongs to the convicted parties.

9. The trial of an organ of the press by the Revolutionary Tribunal of the Press does not absolve the guilty persons from general criminal responsibility.

I.Z. Shteinberg

Peoples' Commissar of Justice

*The Nation*, December 28, 1918, p. 823, with minor modifications by the editor.



## ON REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNALS

December 19, 1917 (January 1, 1918)

*Revolutionary Tribunals were established by order of the People's Commissar of Justice as part of a two-court system to replace the old judiciary. The so-called "Peoples' Courts" (see decree of November 22, above) generally dealt with lesser cases and the Revolutionary Tribunals with more important ones, especially political cases. Their actions were often arbitrary, and frequently confused with summary judgments by Cheka officials. They functioned throughout the Civil War, after which their functions were divided among other courts. After the Left SR Commissar of Justice, I. Z. Shteinberg (Steinberg), a staunch opponent of capital punishment, left the government, that punishment was added to the power of the Tribunals, at Lenin's insistence, on June 16, 1918. A Revolutionary Tribunal of the Press was created along with the regular tribunals (see December 18, 1917). Special Military and Railroad Revolutionary Tribunals were established in 1919 and 1920 respectively.*

## INSTRUCTIONS ON THE REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL

The Revolutionary Tribunal is guided by the following instructions:

1. The Revolutionary Tribunal has jurisdiction in cases of persons (a) who organize uprisings against the authority of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, actively oppose the latter or do not obey it, or call upon other persons to oppose or disobey it;



(b) who utilize their position in the state or public service to disturb or hamper the regular progress of work in the institution or enterprise in which they are or have been serving (sabotage, concealing or destroying documents or property, etc.);

(c) who stop or reduce production of articles of general use without actual necessity for so doing;

(d) who violate the decrees, orders, binding ordinances and other published acts of the organs of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, if such acts stipulate a trial by the Revolutionary Tribunal for their violation;

(e) who, taking advantage of their social or administrative position, misuse the authority given them by the revolutionary people. Crimes against the people committed by means of the press are under the jurisdiction of a specially instituted Revolutionary Tribunal.

2. The Revolutionary Tribunal for offenses indicated in Article 1 imposes upon the guilty the following penalties: (1) fine, (2) deprivation of freedom, (3) exile from the capitals, from particular localities, or from the territory of the Russian Republic, (4) public censure, (5) declaring the offender a public enemy, (6) deprivation of all or some political rights, (7) sequestration or confiscation, partial or general, of property, (8) sentence of compulsory public work. The Revolutionary Tribunal fixes the penalty, being guided by the circumstances of the case and dictates of the revolutionary conscience.

3. (a) The Revolutionary Tribunal is elected by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies and consists of one permanent chairman, two permanent substitutes, one permanent secretary and two substitutes, and forty jurors. All persons, except the jurors, are elected for three months and may be recalled by the Soviets before the expiration of the term.

(b) The jurors are selected for one month from a general list of jurors by the Executive Committees of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies by drawing lots, and lists of jurors numbering six, and one or two in addition, are made up for each session.

(c) The session of each successive jury of the Revolutionary Tribunal lasts not longer than one week.

(d) A stenographic record is kept of the entire proceedings of the Revolutionary Tribunal.

(e) The grounds for instituting proceedings are: reports of legal and administrative institutions and officials, public, trade, and party organizations, and private persons.

(f) For the conduct of the preliminary investigation in such cases an investigating commission is created under the Revolutionary Tribunal, consisting of six members elected by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

(g) Upon receiving information or complaint, the investigating commission examines it and within 48 hours either orders the dismissal of the case, if it does not find that a crime has been committed, or transfers it to the proper jurisdiction, or brings it up for trial at the session of the Revolutionary Tribunal.

(h) The orders of the investigating commission about arrests, searches, abstracts of papers, and releases of detained persons are valid if issued jointly by three members. In cases which do not permit of delay such orders may be issued by any member of the investigating commission singly, on the condition that within twelve hours the measure shall be approved by the investigating commission.

(i) The order of the investigating commission is carried out by the Red Guard, the militia, the troops and the executive organs of the Republic.

(j) Complaints against the decisions of the investigating commission are submitted to the Revolutionary Tribunal through its president and are considered at executive sessions of the Revolutionary Tribunal.

(k) The investigating commission has the right: (a) to demand of all departments and officials, as well as of all local self-governing bodies, legal institutions and authorities, public notaries, social and trade organizations, commercial and industrial enterprises, and governmental, public, and private credit institutions, the delivery of necessary documents

and information, and of unfinished cases; (b) to examine, through its members or special representatives, the transactions of all above enumerated institutions and officials in order to secure necessary information.

4. The sessions of the Revolutionary Tribunal are public.

5. The verdicts of the Revolutionary Tribunal are rendered by a majority of votes of the members of the Tribunal.

6. The legal investigation is made with the participation of the prosecution and defence.

7. (a) Citizens of either sex who enjoy political rights are admitted at the will of the parties as prosecutors and counsel for the defence, with the right to participate in the case.

(b) Under the Revolutionary tribunals a collegium of persons is created who devote themselves to the service of the law, in the form of public prosecution as well as of public defence.

(c) The above-mentioned collegium is formed by the free registration of all persons who desire to render aid to revolutionary justice, and who present recommendations from the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

8. The Revolutionary Tribunal may invite for each case a public prosecutor from the membership of the above-named collegium.

9. If the accused does not for some reason use his right to invite counsel for defence, the Revolutionary Tribunal, at his request, appoints a member of the collegium for his defence.

10. Besides the above-mentioned prosecutors and defence, one prosecutor and one counsel for defence drawn from the public present at the session, may take part in the court's proceedings.

11. The verdicts of the Revolutionary Tribunal are final. In case of violation of the form of procedure established by these instructions, or the discovery of indications of obvious injustice in the verdict, the People's Commissar of Justice has the right to address to the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies a request to order a second and last trial of the case.

12. The maintenance of the Revolutionary Tribunal is charged to the account of the state. The amount of compensation and the daily fees are fixed by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. The jurors receive the difference between the daily fees and their daily earnings, if the latter are less than the daily fees; at the same time the jurors may not be deprived of their positions during the session.

I.Z. Shteinberg

People's Commissar of Justice

*The Nation*, December 28, 1918, pp. 822-823, with modifications by the editor.



## REPORT BY STALIN ON FINNISH INDEPENDENCE AND SELF-DETERMINATION

December 22, 1917 (January 4, 1918)

*Early Bolshevik views on independence for areas of the Russian empire were not wholly consistent. Officially the right of self-determination was recognized (see November 2, 1917 and January 15, 1918), but in practice this was usually restricted by interpretations stressing that it could be exercised only by or in the interests of the proletariat, thereby effectively negating it. In the case of Finland, however, the Soviet government did agree to recognize both independence and a non-socialist government. Most observers then and since have attributed this to an expectation that a socialist revolution would soon occur in Finland (and one did, within*

*a month, only to be ousted at the end of the Finnish civil war which followed). However, inability to retain control and earlier Bolshevik statements supporting Finnish independence also encouraged a different response than to the Ukraine. This is the account, as published in Pravda, of Stalin's presentation to the Central Executive Committee for ratification on December 22/January 4; the decree which he quotes was issued on December 18/31.*

The other day representatives of Finland applied to us with a demand for immediate recognition of Finland's complete independence and endorsement of its secession from Russia. The Council of People's Commissars resolved to give its consent and to issue a decree, which has already been published in the newspapers, proclaiming Finland's complete independence.

Here is the text of the decision of the Council of People's Commissars:

"In response to the application of the Finnish Government for recognition of the independence of the Finnish Republic, the Council of People's Commissars, in full conformity with the principle of the right of nations to self-determination, resolves to recommend to the Central Executive Committee: a) to recognize the state independence of the Finnish Republic, and b) to set up, in agreement with the Finnish Government, a special commission (composed of representatives of both sides) to elaborate the practical measures necessitated by the secession of Finland from Russia."

Naturally, the Council of People's Commissars could not act otherwise, for if a nation, through its representatives, demands recognition of its independence, a proletarian government, acting on the principle of granting the peoples the right to self-determination, must give its consent.

The bourgeois press asserts that we have brought about the complete disintegration of the country, that we have lost a whole number of countries, including Finland. But, comrades, we could not lose Finland, because actually it was never our property. If we forcibly retained Finland, that would not mean that we had acquired it.

We know perfectly well how Wilhelm forcibly and arbitrarily "acquires" entire states and what sort of a basis this creates for mutual relations between the peoples and their oppressors.

The principles of Social-Democracy, its slogans and aspirations, consist in creating the long-awaited atmosphere of mutual confidence among nations, and only on such a basis is the slogan, "Workers of all countries, unite!" realizable. All this is old and well known.

If we closely examine the circumstances in which Finland obtained independence, we shall see that the Council of People's Commissars, actually and against its own wishes, granted freedom not to the people, not to the representatives of the Finnish proletariat, but to the Finnish bourgeoisie, which, owing to a strange conjuncture of circumstances, seized power and received independence from the hands of the Russian Socialists. The Finnish workers and Social-Democrats find themselves in the position of having to receive freedom not from the Socialists of Russia directly, but through the Finnish bourgeoisie. Regarding this as a tragedy for the Finnish proletariat, we cannot help remarking that it was only because of their irresolution and unaccountable cowardice that the Finnish Social-Democrats did not take vigorous measures to assume power themselves and wrest their independence from the hands of the Finnish bourgeoisie.

The Council of People's Commissars may be abused, may be criticized, but no one can assert that it does not carry out its promises; for there is no force on earth that can compel the Council of People's Commissars to break its promises. This we have demonstrated by the absolute impartiality with which we accepted the demand of the Finnish bourgeoisie that Finland be granted independence, and by proceeding at once to issue a decree proclaiming the independence of Finland.

May the independence of Finland help the emancipation of the Finnish workers and peasants and create a firm basis for friendship between our peoples.

Stalin, *Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 23-25.

## ON THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF LOCAL SOVIETS

December 24, 1917 (January 6, 1918), and January 9 (22) 1918

*The new government in Petrograd formally based itself on the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, but the spread of the revolution depended heavily on the actions of local soviets. This decree of the Council of People's Commissars (the first document) not only confirmed that the local and regional soviets, at all levels, were the new governmental bodies, but also asserted their subordination to the central government. It also abolished the Military Revolutionary Committees, which had taken on the role of local government in many instances. Concern over chaotic local government is reflected by the issuance of a supplemental decree on January 9 (22), 1918 (the second document), spelling out the structure and organization of local soviets.*

## INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF SOVIETS [December 24]

1. Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, being local organs, are quite independent in regard to questions of a local character, but always act in accord with the decrees of the central Soviet Government as well as of the larger bodies (district, provincial and regional Soviets) of which they form a part.

2. Upon the Soviets, as organs of government, devolve the tasks of administration and service in all departments of local life—administrative, economic, financial and educational.

3. Under administration, the Soviets carry out all decrees and decisions of the central Government, take measures for giving the people the widest information about those decisions, issue obligatory ordinances, make requisitions and confiscations, impose fines, suppress counter-revolutionary organs of the press, make arrests, and dissolve public organizations which incite active opposition or the overthrow of the Soviet Government.

Note: The Soviets render a report to the central Soviet Government regarding all measures undertaken by them and important local events.

4. The Soviets elect from their number an executive organ which is charged with the duty of carrying out their decisions and the performance of the current work of administration.

Note 1: The Military-Revolutionary Committees, as fighting organs which came into existence during the revolution, are abolished.

Note 2: As a temporary measure, it is permitted to appoint Commissars in those provinces and districts where the power of the Soviet is not sufficiently well-established or where the Soviet Government is not exclusively recognized.

5. The Soviets, being organs of government, are allowed credits from state funds for three months upon the presentation of detailed budgets.

## INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE ORGANIZATION OF SOVIETS [January 9]

At the session of the collegium under the People's Commissar for Internal Affairs, on January 9, 1918, instructions as to the organization of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies were voted as follows:

In all Soviets, in place of the old, antiquated government institutions, the following departments or commissariats must first be organized:

1. Administration, in charge of the domestic and foreign relations of the Republic and technically unifying all the other departments.

2. Finances, whose duty is the compilation of the local budget, the collection of local and state taxes, the carrying out of measures for the nationalization of the banks, the administration of the People's Bank, control over the disbursement of national funds, etc.

3. Board of National Economy, which organizes the manufacture of most necessary products of factory, mill, and home industries, determines the amount of raw materials and fuel, obtains and distributes them, organizes and supplies the rural economy, etc.

4. Land, whose duty is to make an exact survey of the land, forests, waters, and other resources, and their distribution for purposes of utilization.

5. Labor, which must organize and unite trade unions, factory and mill committees, peasant associations, etc., and also create insurance organizations of all kinds.

6. Ways of Communication, whose duty is the taking of measures for the nationalization of the railways and steamship enterprises, the direction of this most important branch of the national economy, the building of new roads of local importance, etc.

7. Post, Telegraph and Telephone, which must aid and develop these state enterprises.

8. Public Education, which looks after the education and instruction of the population in the school and out of school, establishes new schools, kindergartens, universities, libraries, clubs, etc., carries out measures for the nationalization of printing-shops, the publication of necessary periodicals and books and their circulation among the population, etc.

9. Legal, which must liquidate the old courts, organize people's and arbitration courts, take charge of places of detention, reform them, etc.

10. Medical-Sanitary, whose duty is sanitary-hygienic supervision, the organization of medical aid accessible to all, sanitary equipment of urban and rural settlements, etc.

11. Public Realty, whose duty is the regulation of the housing problem, supervision over confiscated and public buildings, the construction of new ones, etc.

Note: Soviets are advised to utilize the organizational apparatus of Zemstvo and municipal institutions, with appropriate changes, when forming the departments.

At the same session was passed the draft of the decree fixing the boundaries of provinces, districts, etc., as follows:

1. Questions of changes of boundaries of provinces, districts, or townships are to be settled entirely by the local Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants', and Laborers' Deputies.

2. When parts of one province or territory are included in another, the technical questions and misunderstandings which arise are dealt with by mixed commissions of the interested Provincial Soviets or their congress.

3. A similar procedure is followed when the boundaries of a district or township are rectified at the expense of another.

4. Territories, provinces, districts and townships may also be divided into parts, forming new administrative economic units.

5. Detailed data regarding all such changes are reported to the Commissary for Internal Affairs.

*The Nation*, December 28, 1918, pp. 821-822.



#### KRYLENKO'S APPEAL FOR VOLUNTEERS TO FORM A SOCIALIST PEOPLE'S GUARD

December 25, 1917 (January 7, 1918)

*The melting away of the old army left the Bolsheviks in an increasingly weak position against both Germany and internal enemies. Many Bolsheviks associated with military affairs were ideologically opposed to armies and hoped to rely on volunteer "guards" (the terminology varies within the document). Krylenko's appeal reflects the outlook of many Bolsheviks at the time.*

#### ON THE CREATION OF A REVOLUTIONARY PEOPLE'S SOCIALIST ARMY Comrades!

The decisive moment is drawing near. After the conclusion of the armistice we entered into peace negotiations. You know of the first reply made by the Germans. The German

bourgeois robbers, who would have been only too glad to tear us to pieces, were forced to bow to the will of the war-exhausted people and to acknowledge that peace must be concluded on the basis of the equal rights of all nations, that all occupied territory must be handed back, that there shall be no indemnities and that the independence of those nations which have lost it during the war shall be re-established. Thus did the Germans make answer and with justification did the Russian revolution celebrate its victory. The long awaited peace and an honourable peace, a democratic peace, a peace for all nations, was to recompense the Russian revolutionary army for all its sufferings and its weariness. But the cup of suffering is not yet drained to the dregs.

Comrades! The Germans made their answer depend on the recognition by all the belligerent peoples and governments of the same conditions of a democratic people. But the capitalist governments of Europe kept silence and accordingly the speech of the Germans towards Russia changed its tone. The cause of peace is endangered. The Germans speak definitely of annexations and occupations in the event of a separate peace with Russia. In so doing they call attention to the Ukrainian Rada. They say that if the Russian High Command is unable to control all the fronts, if the possibility of the war continuing along the southern front is not precluded, then they, the Germans, will no longer agree to the previous conditions. The Rada is destroying peace. In these circumstances we are in danger of becoming the victims of the robber lust of the German capitalists. The Russian Soviet Republic is surrounded by enemies on every side. The American and French bourgeoisie are ready to make an alliance with them in order to strike down the Russian revolution. Inside Russia, under pretext of defending the independence of the Ukraine, Kaledin's accomplices in the Central Rada, in alliance with deserter officers, with the ringleader Shcherbatchov and with the Roumanian Government—who on the Roumanian front are shooting down the very soldiers who have shed their blood for them—have all joined together against the Soviets and the Government of the People's Commissars.

Comrades! In these circumstances the workers and peasants of Russia are confronted with the problem of defending all the gains of the revolution and of waging a sacred war against all enemies: a sacred, revolutionary war against the Russian, German, Anglo-French bourgeoisie. If they are victorious they will make no conditions with us. They will drench the whole world in blood because of the people's moment of triumph which they have had to suffer. They will answer it with horrors and executions besides which the executions of the Tsarist satellites will grow pale; for there are no wilder beasts or crueller executioners than the bourgeoisie when they take their revenge on the people for their moment of triumph. A sacred, revolutionary war at the front and behind the lines confronts you, in all probability as a threatening necessity. In these circumstances the task of creating an armed force in defence confronts the people.

Comrades! The army is weary, the army is exhausted. The old army, the army of the past is not fit for such a task. Hence a new army must be created, an army of the armed people whose beginnings we have in the Red Guard of the workers. I call upon all who love liberty to create such an army. A revolutionary Socialist People's Guard must be formed everywhere, at the front and behind the lines. Admittance to this guard must be free to true defenders of liberty and of the revolution on the recommendation of the regimental and company committees. In whole regiments and individually, in companies and battalions, people must be enrolled and be sent to form divisions of troops of such a revolutionary guard at appointed places behind the lines. Definite places will be appointed for such formations in all reserve depots. All, not alone the soldiers of the Reserve, will be called to arms. Every man who is accepted into the ranks of this people's socialist workers' and peasants' guard must know that he enters the ranks of fighters whose duty it is to live and die fighting. The material position of these detachments will be laid down in a separate order. The strictest discipline must prevail in these detachments. A revolutionary court of soldiers must unite all the fighters of the Socialist Guard with strong ties and punish any infringement of discipline.

Comrades! The peoples of the west look towards us with hope and trust. In Italy and Spain, in Germany and France, in Austria and Sweden the exhausted peoples wait impatiently for the call to battle against their bourgeoisie, and their regiments will not march against revolutionary Russia. Let all of you inscribe yourselves in the ranks of the People's Guard of defenders of liberty. Create a new and mighty force, a weapon of defence for the revolution and for socialism. The Council of People's Commissars has already given the land to the people. The Workers' and Peasants' Government has already decided to make the banks State property. Furthermore the factories and industrial concerns are also to be made the property of the whole people and hence all the greater must be the readiness to defend what has been begun. Hungry, freezing, naked, barefooted, surrounded as you are by enemies on every side, show what an inexhaustible source of strength is still hidden among the revolutionary proletariat and the poorest peasants.

There is to be no compulsion to enrol in these regiments. Whoever cannot, whoever does not feel strong enough, to enter the fray, must not go into it. We need a revolutionary army of fighters and not an army of those who only think of their homes. At the front for the present, until the coming of the battalions formed in the rear, there shall be only enrolment. The enrolled will be brought behind the lines later on at the right time. I call upon you all to hold out and to strain your last forces.

Comrades and brothers—Ukrainians! I cannot but believe that you too will follow the call to defend the cause of liberty. I firmly believe that hand in hand with us, with the other peoples, with the workers and peasants of Russia you, too, will enter the ranks of the fighters.

In all the districts behind the lines everyone in whose breast there beats the heart of a revolutionary will be called upon. The comrades in the trenches will receive support and reinforcements and then we shall not need to fear the might of the bourgeois armies. The people's Socialist Guard which defends the Socialist Government must win the day.

The Supreme Commander: Krylenko

Astrov, Vol. 2, pp. 485-486.



### LIFE IN A PROVINCIAL CITY

December 28-31, 1917 (January 10-13, 1918)

*Alexis Babine wrote one of the few genuine diaries of the revolution to be printed as such (i.e., as written at the time rather than rewritten afterwards). Of lower middle-class, small town origins, he had lived several years in the United States and returned to Russia in 1910, becoming an instructor at the new Saratov University in 1917. Basically non-political (although he despised the new Bolshevik rulers), his is an account of the problems of daily life in provincial Russia: food, living quarters, personal and public safety, and the random violence that accompanied the revolution and civil war. The guard duty he describes was common at this time, when citizens organized to provide minimal security either for their area or their apartment building. The posting up of notices, decrees, and papers was a common practice also.*

December 28, 1917. 11:30 A.M. Constant burglaries and murders and the inadequacy of police protection under the new demoralized anarchical regime compelled citizens to organize civil vigilance companies with compulsory attendance on the part of all able-bodied males. Last night I performed my duty as a guardsman for the first time. Aside from a big fire somewhere beyond the city limits, nothing of notice happened during the night. Relieved of my duties at 7 A.M., I hurried to the bakery with the intention of taking advantage of my guardsman's privilege and of getting my loaf ahead of the bread line, but found a notice on the door to the effect that there would be no bread before 9 A.M.

On returning home I took Boss [his dog] out for a walk, went to bed and did not get up until nearly eleven o'clock. When my maid failed to answer several of my bells I went to the kitchen, but found it empty. The landlady, whom I approached on the matter, explained to me that the maid had gone to see a lynching. It turned out that at about 10 A.M. three robbers got into a house nearly opposite ours. The inmates managed to raise an alarm, one of the robbers was killed outright, one ran away, and one was caught by soldiers. The crowd that had assembled in front of the house roared for the last named—and our maid hastened there to see the execution. Our servant soon returned with her story. When she got to the scene, soldiers were killing the second man with their bayonets. The body was put on a sleigh, and the face covered with a piece of fiber matting. But the matting would slip off and expose the blood-covered head and the face pierced with bayonets. That victim was a young man, almost a boy.

The robbers wounded their man in the hand, but his wife flung herself into the backyard through a window—glass and all—cutting herself considerably. Both of them were taken to a hospital.

At this point in the maid's story our janitor was let into the kitchen and reported the capture of the third malefactor.

The crowds are said to become perfectly frantic on such occasions and invariably demand immediate execution. A pious and charitable old lady who happened to be present at the lynching of a housebreaker goaded on the crowd, though under ordinary circumstances she would not hurt a fly. "Everybody is so tired of them," our old janitor explained. He, too, saw no other way out of it.

December 29, 1917. Yesterday's execution of the housebreakers was the work of women, exclusively, who surrounded the building after the alarm had been raised. They got hold of heavy sticks of wood and pounded the captives on their heads, even after they, dead, had been placed on a sleigh.

December 31, 1917. This morning I read a Bolshevik notice on a board fence (the usual way in which the Bolshevik rulers announce their will in Saratov ever since the involuntary death of local newspapers) to the effect that searches of private residences will be made all over the city for concealed stores of provisions. The searches are to be conducted under certain regulations between the hours of 9 A.M. and 5 P.M.

The demonstration, which had been planned for December 17, and which so ignominiously failed, was announced again for today—to fail again. But crowds gathered on some street crossings and listened to speeches condemning the existing misrule. The meetings and the speeches were evidently not to the Bolsheviks' taste, and the crowds were encouraged to disband by the firing of muskets in the air and by strong armed patrols.

I overheard a workman murmur to his companion on the street: "Soldiers are worse than dogs nowadays."

Babine, pp. 38-40.



## 2 THE YEAR 1918

### DISSOLUTION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

January 6 (19) 1918

*The Constituent Assembly, whose convocation had been a beacon for socialists and liberals for decades, finally convened on January 5, 1918. The Bolsheviks and their allies were in a minority, and various party statements since the elections in November had pointed toward possible suppression of the Assembly (see Lenin's "Theses" of December 11/12 for example, above). Meeting under a hostile gallery and "guards" who they had not requested, they refused Bolshevik motions to in effect recognize Lenin's government, after which the Bolsheviks and Left SRs walked out. When the deputies attempted to reconvene the next day, they were blocked by armed guards and this decree of dissolution (which had been drafted by Lenin) published. By announcing that the government could not be changed through elections, the dissolution also ended any possibility of avoiding civil war.*

### DECREE OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DISSOLVING THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

The Russian revolution at its outset brought the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies into the foreground as the mass organisation of all the working and exploited classes. They alone are capable of leading these classes in their struggle for complete political and economic freedom.

As the first period of the Russian revolution proceeded the Soviets increased, grew and won strength, abandoning, as the result of their own experience, the illusion of an understanding with the bourgeoisie, with the deceitful forms of bourgeois democratic Parliamentarism and from practical experience coming to the conclusion that freedom for the oppressed classes is impossible without making a break with these forms and with all kind of compromise. The October revolution made such a break—the transference of all power into the hands of the Soviets.

The Constituent Assembly elected from lists presented before the October revolution was the expression of the former political class relationships of the time when the compromisers and the Cadets were at the helm.

The people, when they voted for the candidates of the Social Revolutionary Party, were not then in a position to make their choice between the Right Social Revolutionaries, the adherents of the bourgeoisie, and the Left Social Revolutionaries, the adherents of socialism. Thus this Constituent Assembly, which should have been the crown of the bourgeois parliamentary Republic, could not but thwart the designs of the October revolution and the Soviet Power. In that the October revolution gave power to the Soviets and through the Soviets to the working and exploited classes it roused the desperate resistance of the exploiters and in overcoming this resistance, showed itself to be the beginning of the socialist revolution.

The working classes must be convinced, as the result of their own experience, that the old, bourgeois parliamentary system has outlived itself, that it is absolutely inconsistent with the realisation of socialism, that not common-national institutions but only class institutions (such as the Soviets) are able to overcome the resistance of the possessing classes and to lay the foundations of a socialist social order.

Any retreat from the complete sovereignty of the Soviets, any going back upon the Soviet Republic won by the people, in favour of a bourgeois parliamentarism and consequently in favour of the Constituent Assembly, would now be a step backwards and lead to the destruction of the whole October revolution of the workers and peasants.

The Constituent Assembly, opened on January 5th, gave, as a result of circumstances known to all, a majority to the Party of the Right Social Revolutionaries, *i.e.*, to the Party of Kerensky, Avksentiev and Chernov. It was to be expected that this party should refuse to put on the Agenda the absolutely exact, clear immutable resolution of the highest Soviet organisations for the recognition of the "Declaration of the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People," of the October revolution and of the Soviet Power. In doing this the Constituent Assembly cut all ties between itself and the Russian Soviet Republic. It was inevitable that the fraction of the Bolsheviks and Left Social Revolutionaries—which at this moment are known to have an overwhelming majority in the Soviets and enjoy the confidence of the workers and most of the peasants—should leave such a Constituent Assembly.

And outside the walls of the Constituent Assembly, the Parties which hold a majority in the Constituent Assembly, the Right Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks are waging open war against the Soviet Power by calling for the overthrow of the latter in their journals and thereby objectively supporting the exploiters in their resistance to the transfer of the land and of the factories to those who labour. It is clear that the remaining section of the Constituent Assembly can, in these circumstances, but serve as a cloak for the struggle of the bourgeois counter-revolution to overthrow the Soviet Power.

Consequently the Central Executive Committee resolves: *The Constituent Assembly shall be dissolved.*

Astrov, Vol. 2, pp. 493-494.



## LENIN ON THE NEED FOR AN IMMEDIATE PEACE

January 7 (20) 1918

*The peace terms laid down by Germany divided the Bolshevik leadership (as well as worsened relations with the Left SRs). The Bolshevik leaders broke into three main groupings. The "left," with Bukharin as main spokesman, favored rejecting the German terms and calling for a "revolutionary war." Lenin considered that utopian and argued for acceptance of the German terms as a matter of necessity. A third grouping attempted to avoid the harsh choice and clustered around Trotsky's proposal to refuse to sign the treaty and to simply declare the war ended—"No War, No Peace". Lenin wrote these theses to lay out the reasons why the peace terms had to be and could be accepted. He read it to a group of about sixty party leaders on January 8. A 22nd thesis was added later but dropped before publication (and is not included here). Since the publication of the theses on February 24 was after the party leaders had agreed to accept the German terms, publication must be assumed to have been intended to win popular support and prepare the forthcoming Seventh Party Congress and the Third Congress of Soviets for approval of the treaty.*

V.I. Lenin

### *Theses on the Question of the Immediate Conclusion of a Separate and Annexationist Peace*

1. The position of the Russian revolution at the present moment is such that nearly all the workers and the vast majority of the peasants undoubtedly side with Soviet power and the socialist revolution which it has started. To that extent the socialist revolution in Russia is assured.

2. At the same time, the civil war, provoked by the frantic resistance of the wealthy classes, who realise full well that they are faced with the last and decisive fight for the preservation of private ownership of the land and means of production, has not yet reached its climax. The victory of Soviet power in this war is assured, but some time must inevitably elapse, no little exertion of effort will inevitably be required, a certain period of acute economic dislocation and chaos, which accompany all wars, and civil war in particular, is inevitable, before the resistance of the bourgeoisie is crushed.

3. Furthermore, this resistance, in its less active and non-military forms—sabotage, the hire of declassed elements and agents of the bourgeoisie, who worm their way into the ranks of the socialists in order to ruin their cause, and so on and so forth—has proved so stubborn and capable of assuming such diversified forms, that the fight against it will inevitably require some more time, and, in its main forms, is hardly likely to end until several months have passed. And unless this passive and covert resistance of the bourgeoisie and its supporters is definitely crushed the socialist revolution cannot succeed.

4. Lastly, the organisational problems of the socialist transformation of Russia are so immense and difficult that their solution—in view of the numerous petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers of the socialist proletariat, and of the latter's low cultural level—will also require a fairly long time.

5. All these circumstances taken together are such as to make it perfectly clear that for the success of socialism in Russia a certain amount of time, several months at least, will be necessary, during which the hands of the socialist government must be absolutely free to achieve victory over the bourgeoisie first in our own country and to launch far-reaching mass organisational work on a wide scale.

6. The position of the socialist revolution in Russia must form the basis of any definition of the international tasks of our Soviet power, for the international situation in the fourth year of the war is such that it is quite impossible to predict the probable moment of outbreak of revolution and overthrow of any of the European imperialist governments (including the German). That the socialist revolution in Europe must come, and will come, is beyond doubt. All our hopes for the *final* victory of socialism are founded on this certainty and on this scientific prognosis. Our propaganda activities in general, and the organisation of fraternisation in particular, must be intensified and extended. It would be a mistake, however, to base the tactics of the Russian socialist government on attempts to determine whether or not the European, and especially the German, socialist revolution will take place in the next six months (or some such brief period). Inasmuch as it is quite impossible to determine this, all such attempts, objectively speaking, would be nothing but a blind gamble.

7. The peace negotiations in Brest-Litovsk have by now—January 7, 1918—made it perfectly clear that the war party has undoubtedly gained the upper hand in the German Government (which has the other governments of the Quadruple Alliance at its beck and call) and has virtually already presented Russia with an ultimatum (and it is to be expected, most certainly to be expected, that any day now it will be presented formally). The ultimatum is as follows: either the continuation of the war, or a peace with annexations, i.e., peace on condition that we surrender all the territory we have occupied, while the Germans retain all the territory they have occupied and impose upon us an indemnity (outwardly disguised as payment for the maintenance of prisoners)—an indemnity of about three thousand million rubles, payable over a number of years.

8. The socialist government of Russia is faced with the question—a question whose solution brooks no delay—of whether to accept this peace with annexations now, or to immediately wage a revolutionary war. In fact, no middle course is possible. No further postponement can now be achieved, for we have *already* done everything possible and impossible to deliberately protract the negotiations.

9. On examining the arguments in favour of an immediate revolutionary war, the first argument we encounter is that a separate peace at this juncture would, objectively speaking,

be an agreement with the German imperialists, an "imperialistic deal", and so forth, and that, consequently, such a peace would mean a complete break with the fundamental principles of proletarian internationalism. This argument, however, is obviously incorrect. Workers who lose a strike and sign terms for the resumption of work which are unfavourable to them and favorable to the capitalists, do not betray socialism. The only people who betray socialism are those who secure advantages for a section of the workers in exchange for profit to the capitalists; only such agreements are impermissible in principle.

He betrays socialism who calls the war with German imperialism a defensive and just war, but actually receives support from the Anglo-French imperialists, and conceals secret treaties concluded with them from the people. He does not in the least betray socialism who, without concealing anything from the people, and without concluding any secret treaties with the imperialists, agrees to sign terms of peace which are unfavourable to the weak nation and favourable to the imperialists of one group, if at that moment there is no strength to continue the war.

10. Another argument in favour of immediate war is that, by concluding peace, we objectively become agents of German imperialism, for we afford it the opportunity to release troops from our front, we surrender to it millions of prisoners of war, and so on. But this argument too is manifestly incorrect, for a revolutionary war at the present juncture would, objectively speaking, make us agents of Anglo-French imperialism, by providing it with forces which would promote its aims. The British bluntly offered our Commander-in-Chief, Krylenko, one hundred rubles per month for every one of our soldiers provided we continued the war. Even if we did not take a single kopek from the Anglo-French, we nevertheless would be helping them, objectively speaking, by diverting part of the German army.

From that point of view, in neither case would we be entirely escaping some sort of imperialist bond, and it is obvious that it is impossible to escape it completely without overthrowing world imperialism. The correct conclusion from this is that the moment a socialist government triumphed in any one country, questions must be decided, not from the point of view of whether this or that imperialism is preferable, but exclusively from the point of view of the conditions which best make for the development and consolidation of the socialist revolution which has already begun.

In other words, the underlying principle of our tactics must not be, which of the two imperialisms it is more profitable to aid at this juncture, but rather, how the socialist revolution can be most firmly and reliably ensured the possibility of consolidating itself, or, at least, of maintaining itself in one country until it is joined by other countries.

11. It is said that the German Social-Democratic opponents of the war have now become "defeatists" and are requesting us not to yield to German imperialism. But we recognised defeatism only in respect of *one's own* imperialist bourgeoisie, and we always discounted victory over an alien imperialism, victory attained in formal or actual alliance with a "friendly" imperialism, as a method impermissible in principle and generally wrong.

This argument is therefore only a modification of the previous one. If the German Left Social-Democrats were proposing that we delay concluding a separate peace for a *definite* period, and guaranteed revolutionary action in Germany within this period, the question *might* assume a different aspect for us. Far from saying this, however, the German Lefts formally declare: "Hold out as long as you can, but decide the question from the point of view of the state of affairs in the *Russian* socialist revolution, for we cannot promise you anything positive regarding the German revolution."

12. It is said that in a number of Party statements we actually "promised" a revolutionary war, and that by concluding a separate peace we would be going back on our word.

That is not true. We said that in the era of imperialism a socialist government *had* to "*prepare for and wage*" a revolutionary war; we said this in order to combat abstract pacifism and the theory that "defence of the fatherland" must be completely rejected in the era of imperialism, and, lastly to combat the purely selfish instincts of a part of the soldiers, but

we never gave any pledge to start a revolutionary war without considering whether it is possible to wage it at a given moment.

Unquestionably, even at this juncture we must *prepare for a revolutionary war*. We are carrying out this promise, as we have, in general, carried out all our promises that could be carried out at once: we annulled the secret treaties, offered all peoples a fair peace, and several times did our best to drag out peace negotiations so as to give other peoples a chance to join us.

But the question whether it is possible to carry on a revolutionary war *now, immediately*, must be decided exclusively from the point of view of whether material conditions permit it, and of the interests of the socialist revolution which has already begun.

13. Summing up the arguments in favour of an immediate revolutionary war, we have to conclude that such a policy might perhaps answer the human yearning for the beautiful, dramatic and striking, but that it would totally disregard the objective balance of class forces and material factors at the present stage of the socialist revolution now under way.

14. There can be no doubt that our army is absolutely in no condition at the present moment, and will not be for the next few weeks (and probably for the next few months), to beat back a German offensive successfully; firstly, owing to the extreme fatigue and exhaustion of the majority of the soldiers, coupled with the incredible chaos in the matter of food supply, replacement of the overfatigued, etc.; secondly, owing to the utter unfitness of the horses and the consequent inevitable ruin of our artillery; and, thirdly, owing to the absolute impossibility of defending the coastline from Riga to Revel, which affords the enemy a very certain chance of seizing the rest of Lifland, and then Estland, and of outflanking a large part of our forces, and finally, of capturing Petrograd.

15. Further, there is not the slightest doubt that the peasant majority of our army would at the present juncture unreservedly declare in favour of a peace with annexations and not in favour of an immediate revolutionary war; the socialist reorganisation of the army, the merging of the Red Guard detachments with it, and so on, have only just begun.

With the army completely democratised, to carry on war in defiance of the wishes of the majority of the soldiers would be a reckless gamble, while to create a really staunch and ideologically stable socialist workers' and peasants' army will, at the very least, require months and months.

16. The poor peasants in Russia are capable of supporting the socialist revolution led by the working class, but they are not capable of agreeing to fight a serious revolutionary war immediately, at the present juncture. To ignore the objective balance of class forces on this issue would be a fatal error.

17. Consequently, the situation at present with regard to a revolutionary war is as follows: If the German revolution were to break out and triumph in the coming three or four months, the tactics of an immediate revolutionary war might perhaps not ruin our socialist revolution.

If, however, the German revolution does not occur in the next few months, the course of events, if the war is continued, will inevitably be such that grave defeats will compel Russia to conclude an even more disadvantageous separate peace, a peace, moreover, which would be concluded, not by a socialist government, but by some other (for example, a bloc of the bourgeois Rada and Chernov's followers, or something similar). For the peasant army, which is exhausted to the limit by the war, will after the very first defeats—and very likely within a matter of weeks, and not of months—overthrow the socialist workers' government.

18. This being the state of affairs, it would be absolutely impermissible tactics to stake the fate of the socialist revolution, which has already begun in Russia, merely on the chance that the German revolution may begin in the immediate future, within a matter of weeks. Such tactics would be a reckless gamble. We have no right to take such risks.

19. The German revolution will by no means be made more difficult of accomplishment as far as its objective premises are concerned, if we conclude a separate peace. Probably chauvinist intoxication will weaken it for a time, but Germany's position will remain

extremely grave, the war with Britain and America will be a protracted one, and aggressive imperialism will be fully and completely exposed on both sides. A socialist Soviet Republic in Russia will stand as a living example to the peoples of all countries, and the propaganda and revolutionising effect of this example will be immense. There—the bourgeois system and a fully exposed predatory war between two groups of marauders. Here—peace and a socialist Soviet Republic.

20. In concluding a separate peace we free ourselves *as much as is possible at the present moment* from both hostile imperialist groups, we take advantage of their mutual enmity and warfare which hamper concerted action on their part against us, and for a certain period we have our hands free to advance and to consolidate the socialist revolution. The reorganisation of Russia on the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the nationalisation of the banks and large-scale industry, coupled with *exchange of products* in kind between the towns and the small-peasant consumers' societies, is quite feasible economically, provided we are assured a few months in which to work in peace. And such a reorganisation will render socialism invincible both in Russia and all over the world, and at the same time will create a solid economic basis for a mighty workers' and peasants' Red Army.

21. A really revolutionary war at this juncture would be a war waged by a socialist republic against the bourgeois countries, with the aim—an aim clearly defined and fully approved by the socialist army—of overthrowing the bourgeoisie in other countries. However, we *obviously* cannot set ourselves this aim at the *present* moment. Objectively, we would be fighting now for the liberation of Poland, Lifland and Courland. But no Marxist, without renouncing the principles of Marxism and of socialism generally, can deny that the interests of socialism are higher than the interests of the right of nations to self-determination. Our socialist republic has done all it could, and continues to do all it can to give effect to the right to self-determination of Finland, the Ukraine, etc. But if the concrete situation is such that the existence of the socialist republic is being imperilled at the present moment on account of the violation of the right to self-determination of several nations (Poland, Lifland, Courland, etc.), naturally the preservation of the socialist republic has the higher claim.

Consequently, whoever says, "We cannot sign a humiliating, atrocious, etc., peace, betray Poland, and so forth", does not realise that by concluding peace on the condition that Poland is liberated, he would only be strengthening German imperialism against Britain, Belgium, Serbia and other countries *still further*. Peace on the condition of the liberation of Poland, Lifland and Courland would be a "patriotic" peace *from the point of view of Russia*, but would by no means cease to be a peace *with the annexationists*, with the German imperialists.

Lenin, Vol. 26, pp. 442-450.



## UKRAINIAN DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

January 9 (22) 1918

*After the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly the Rada, by this Fourth Universal (proclamation), declared full independence. See the introduction and document for November 7, 1917.*

People of the Ukraine!

By your efforts, your will, and your word, a Free Ukrainian People's Republic has been created on Ukrainian soil. The ancient dreams of your ancestors—fighters for the freedom and rights of the workers—has been fulfilled. But, the Ukraine's freedom has been reborn

in a difficult hour. Four years of a ferocious war have weakened our Country and population, factories do not produce goods, industry has slowed down, railroads are in disarray, money continues to fall in value; there is less bread, famine looms [before us]. Mobs of robbers and thieves have multiplied throughout the countryside, especially during the times when the army has swarmed from the front, causing slaughter, disorder and ruin on our land. Due to all this, the elections to the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly could not be held on the date set by our previous Universal, and this assembly, which had been scheduled to convene today, could not meet to accept from our hands the temporary, supreme revolutionary authority in the Ukraine, institute order in our People's Republic, and form a new Government. Meanwhile, the Petrograd Government of the People's Commissars, in an attempt to bring back the Free Ukrainian Republic under its rule, has declared war against the Ukraine and is sending into our lands its armies of Red Guards and Bolsheviks, who rob the bread of our peasants, not even sparing the grain set aside for seed, and without any compensation carry it off to Russia; they kill innocent people and spread anarchy, thievery and apathy everywhere.

We, the Ukrainian Central Rada, have done everything to prevent the outbreak of this fratricidal war of two neighboring peoples, but the Petrograd Government has not chosen to meet our efforts, and continues to wage a bloody struggle with our People and [our] Republic; moreover, this same Petrograd Government of People's Commissars has begun delaying the peace and is calling for a new war, which it characterizes as holy [war]. Again, blood will flow, again the ill-fated working people shall be forced to lay down their lives.

We, the Ukrainian Central Rada, elected by the congresses of peasants, workers, and soldiers of the Ukraine, cannot agree to this at all, we will not support any wars, for the Ukrainian People want peace; and a democratic peace must come about promptly. Moreover, in order to ensure that neither the Russian nor any other government shall obstruct the Ukraine's efforts to institute this desired peace, to be able to lead our country to order, to creative work, to the strengthening of the revolution and of our freedom, we, the Ukrainian Central Rada, proclaim to all citizens of the Ukraine:

*From this day forth, the Ukrainian People's Republic becomes independent, subject to no one, a Free, Sovereign State of the Ukrainian People.*

We want to live in harmony and friendship with all neighboring states: Russia, Poland, Austria, Rumania, Turkey, and others, but none of these may interfere in the life of the Independent Ukrainian Republic—power in it shall belong only to the People of the Ukraine, in whose name, we, the Ukrainian Central Rada, the representatives of the toiling people of peasants, workers, and soldiers and our executive arm, henceforth called "the Council of People's Ministers," shall govern until the convocation of the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly.

First of all, we direct the government of our Republic, the Council of People's Ministers, to continue on an independent basis the peace negotiations already begun with the Central Powers, to carry them through to conclusion without regard for the interference by any other part of the former Russian Empire, and to establish peace, so that our Country may begin its economic life in tranquility and harmony.

As to the so-called Bolsheviks and other aggressors who destroy and ruin our Country, we direct the Government of the Ukrainian People's Republic to take up a firm and determined struggle against them, and we call upon all citizens of our Republic to defend their welfare and liberty without sparing their lives. Our Ukrainian People's State must be cleared of the violent intruders sent from Petrograd, who trample the rights of the Ukrainian Republic.

The inestimably difficult war, begun by the bourgeois government, has greatly wearied our People; it has already destroyed our Country, ruined the economy. An end must come to this now. While the army is being demobilized, we order that some [members of the armed forces] be released; after the ratification of the peace, the army is to be disbanded completely.

Later, instead of a standing army, a people's militia is to be formed, so that our fighting forces may serve as defenders of the working people, and not at the pleasure of the ruling strata.

Localities destroyed by war and demobilization are to be rebuilt with the aid and through the initiative of our State Treasury. When our soldiers return home, new elections to the people's councils, district, county and city dumas will be called at a time which will be prescribed, so that our soldiers may have a voice in them: meanwhile, such local administration should be established which can be trusted and which will be based on all revolutionary-democratic strata of the people. The government should encourage the cooperation of the councils of peasants', workers' and soldiers' deputies elected from among the local population.

On the matter of land [reform], the commission elected at our last session has already worked out legislation concerning the transfer of the land without compensation to the working people, taking as its base our resolution on the abolition of property and the socialization of the land which was passed at the eighth session. In a few days the whole Central Rada will study this legislation.

The Council of People's Ministers will use all means to ensure that the transfer of land from the land committees to the working people take place without fail before the beginning of spring tilling.

Forests, waters and all mineral resources—the wealth of the Ukrainian working people—are transferred to the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian People's Republic.

The war has also taken all the manpower resources of our country. Most of the factories, enterprises and shops have been producing only that which was necessary for the war, and the nation has been left completely without goods. Now the war has ended. We direct the Council of People's Ministers to begin immediately the change over of all factories and enterprises to peace-time production of goods most needed first and foremost by the toiling masses.

This same war has proliferated hundreds of thousands of unemployed and invalids. In the Independent People's Republic of the Ukraine no working man should suffer. The government should increase the industry of the State, it should begin creative work in all areas in which the unemployed may find work and to which they may apply their strength and—[the government] should use all means to ensure [the welfare of] the maimed and of those who have suffered from the war.

During the old order, merchants and all sorts of middlemen gained huge capital from the poor oppressed classes. Henceforth, the Ukrainian People's Republic takes into its hands the most important branches of commerce, and all profit derived from them shall be used for the benefit of the people. Our State itself will supervise goods imported and exported so as to prevent the high prices [set] by speculators which are [such a] hardship to the poorest classes. To achieve this aim, we direct the Government of the Republic to prepare and present for approval legislation on this [matter], as well as on the establishment of monopolies in iron, leather, tobacco and other products and merchandise on which the greatest profit has been drawn from the working classes for the benefit of the non-toilers.

Likewise, we order the establishment of state-people's control over all banks whose credits and loans to the non-working masses aided in the exploitation of the toiling classes. Henceforth, bank loans are to be granted primarily to support the working population and the economic development of the Ukrainian People's Republic, and not for speculation and various exploitations by the banks or for profiteering.

Because of anarchy, anxiety in life, and shortage of goods, discontent is growing in a certain segment of the population. Various dark forces are using this discontent and trying to attract unenlightened people to the old system. These dark forces want to put back all free peoples under the unified tsarist yoke of Russia. The Council of People's Ministers should struggle firmly against all counter-revolutionary forces. Anyone who calls for an uprising against the independent Ukrainian Republic, for a return to the old order, must be punished for treason of the state.



All democratic freedoms proclaimed by the Third Universal are reaffirmed by the Ukrainian People's Republic, which particularly proclaims: in the Independent Ukrainian People's Republic all nations enjoy the right of national-personal autonomy, granted to them by the law of January 9.

Whatever matters enumerated in this Universal which we, the Central Rada, will not have time to accomplish will be completed, rectified, and brought to a final order by the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly. We order all our citizens to conduct the elections most assiduously, to use all means to ensure the fastest tabulation of votes possible, in order that our Constituent Assembly—the highest ruler and administrator in our Land—may convene within a few weeks, to establish freedom, harmony, and welfare by a constitution of the Independent Ukrainian People's Republic for the benefit of the whole toiling people, now and in the future.

This our Highest body will decide on the federative ties with the people's republics of the former Russian state.

Until that time we call upon all citizens of the Independent Ukrainian People's Republic to stand relentlessly on guard of the freedom and rights won by our People and to defend their fate with all their might from all enemies of the peasants'-workers' Independent Ukrainian Republic.

Hunczak, pp. 391-395.



## THE TRADE UNIONS AND THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

January 10 (23) 1918

*The role of trade unions in the new state, where the Communist Party claimed to speak for the workers as well as to manage industry, proved to be one of the most difficult and acrimonious issues. Early on, however, Lenin and most Bolshevik leaders showed a marked preference for subordinating the unions to the state and using them as agencies for economic development, and a hostility toward the idea of unions as independent spokesmen for worker interests. That idea is clearly expressed in the following resolution introduced by the Bolsheviks and adopted—not without bitter debate—at the First All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions. The issue remained a subject of debate for several years, but this early resolution indicated the party's ultimate position.*

1. The political victory of the workers and poorer peasants over the imperialists and their petty-bourgeois agents in Russia brings us at the same time a victory over capitalistic ways of production and the beginning of the international socialist revolution. The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies have become government organs, the policy of the government of the workers and peasants has become the policy of socialist reconstruction of society.

2. The November Revolution, which transferred the power from the hands of the bourgeoisie into the hands of the working class and the poorer peasantry, gave rise to entirely new conditions for the activities of all workers' organizations without exception, including the trade unions.

3. Revolutionary socialists have never considered trade unions as mere instruments of the proletariat's economic struggle for bettering the conditions of the working classes within the capitalist order. Revolutionary socialists have always looked upon trade unions as

organizations called upon to fight side by side with all the other revolutionary organizations of the working class for the dictatorship of the proletariat and the realization of socialism. So much greater is the part which the trade unions are called upon to play now when the class struggle has brought the Russian proletariat face to face with the socialist revolution, with the actual realization of a number of the most important socialist projects.

4. The idea of trade-union "neutrality" has always been and remains a bourgeois idea. There is no neutrality and there can be none in the great historic strife between revolutionary socialism and its adversaries. Behind professed neutrality there is almost always concealed the support of bourgeois politics and treason to the interests of the working class. This is proved by the conflict of the two leading tendencies in the European trade-union movement during three and a half years of the World War. The "neutralists" of yesterday everywhere became defensists and servants of imperialism; true socialists should have renounced once and for all the idea of trade-union "neutrality."

5. Still less is it possible to have a "neutral" trade-union movement in Russia, a country which is living through a great revolution and is throwing off the bourgeois yoke. The questions of the Constituent Assembly, the nationalization of banks, the suppression of the bourgeois press, the annulment of loans, the fight against counter-revolution—all these questions touch in the most direct way the interests of the working class, and thereby the interests of the trade-union movement. In all these questions the trade unions must support fully and loyally the policy of the socialist Soviet Government directed by the Soviet of People's Commissars.

6. The center of gravity in the work of the trade unions must, at present, be shifted to the field of economic organization. Trade unions, being class organizations of the proletariat, must take upon themselves the task of organizing production and restoring the shattered productive forces of the country. They should aim to participate most emphatically in the work of all the centers regulating production, to organize workers' control and the registration and distribution of workers, to organize [a system of] exchange between villages and cities, to participate most actively in the demobilization of industry, to fight against sabotage, to enforce the duty of universal labor, etc. Particular attention should be given to the centralization of the trade-union movement on an All-Russian scale and to the organization of powerful unions of agricultural workers.

7. In their mature state, after they have gone through the process of the socialist revolution which is now taking place, trade unions will become instruments of state authority and as such will work in co-ordination with other instruments of the socialist state for the realization of new principles in the organization of economic life.

8. To achieve this end and to effect the amalgamation of all economic organizations of the working classes (particularly the factory-shop committees), there should be the closest possible co-operation and an uninterrupted organizational connection between trade unions and the political organizations of the proletariat and, in the first instance, with the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

9. The Congress is convinced that as a result of the process already taking place the trade unions will inevitably become instruments of the socialist state and that the membership in them of all persons employed in a given industry will be enforced by the government.

The Russian trade-union movement will not be able to fulfil its great tasks unless it establishes the closest contact with the international trade-union movement. The Congress considers it to be its duty to assist in every possible way the rebirth of the international trade-union movement, and thinks that it would be in order to call a general international trade-union congress as well as a number of international trade-union conferences of separate branches of industry.

As a first step in this direction the Congress resolves to call an International Conference of Trade Unions to meet in Petrograd on February 15.

Bunyan and Fisher, pp. 639-641. See Permissions page.

## DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE WORKING AND EXPLOITED PEOPLE

January 12 (25) 1918

*This was originally approved by the Central Executive Committee for presentation to the Constituent Assembly. With modifications it was later ratified by the Third Congress of Soviets. Despite the title, it is fundamentally (1) a constitutional act proclaiming the Republic, vesting authority in the Soviets, and enunciating a federal principle, and (2) a restatement of the basic political and economic policies of the Soviet government. Later it was taken over as a whole and made part I of the Constitution. To avoid duplication, it is printed with the Constitution. (July 10, 1918, below).*



## ESTABLISHMENT OF THE RED ARMY

January 15 (28) 1918

*During the first weeks after seizing power the Bolsheviks relied upon supportive elements of the old army and navy and on volunteers such as the Red Guards. Although debate about the type of military force the new state should have was to rage for several years, and despite ideological attachment to ideas of "arming of all of the people" and militia type formations, with civil war looming and war with Germany still unresolved, creation of a new army along more traditional lines was necessary. The following decree has been called the "birth certificate" of the Red Army.*

## DECREE OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS

The old army served as a weapon of class oppression of the workers by the bourgeoisie. With the transfer of power to the working and exploited classes it has become necessary to create a new army, which will be the base of support for Soviet power at present, the basis for replacing the standing army with the arming of all the people in the future, and serve to support the coming socialist revolution in Europe.

## I

The Council of People's Commissars hereby resolves to organize on the following principles a new army to be known as the *Worker-Peasant Red Army*:

1. The Worker-Peasant Red Army is to be made up of the most class-conscious and organized elements of the toiling masses.

2. Admission to the army is open to all Russian citizens of eighteen years and over and who are ready to devote their strength and lives to the defense of the gains of the revolution, Soviet power and socialism. Admission is by recommendation of the army committees or democratic organizations which stand on the platform of the Soviet government, party and labor organizations, or by at least two members of such organizations. Joining by whole [army or Red Guard] units requires a verified vote and mutual guarantees.

## II

1. Soldiers of the Worker-Peasant Red Army are fully provided for by the state and receive in addition fifty rubles a month.

2. Dependents of Red Army soldiers will be provided for according to the local standards as worked out by the local organs of the Soviet Government.

## III

The Supreme Commanding organ of the Worker-Peasant Red Army is the Council of People's Commissars. The direct command and administration of the army is concentrated in the Commissariat of War and its specially created All-Russian Collegium.

V. Ulianov (Lenin), President of the Sovnarkom

N. Krylenko, Supreme Commander-in-Chief

Dybenko, Podvoisky, People's Commissars of War and Navy.

Meisel and Kozera, pp. 61-62 and *Sobranie uzakoneni i razporiazhenii*, 1918, No. 17, p. 259.



## STALIN ON THE NATIONALITY QUESTION AND SELF-DETERMINATION

January 15 (28) 1918

*Movements aiming toward independence or autonomy developed among the nationality groups of the old Russian empire after the revolution. The Bolsheviks, under Lenin's prodding, had encouraged such movements during 1917, calling for self-determination by nationality groups. Once in power, however, Lenin had no desire to see the breakup of his new state. The task of adjusting the slogans on national self-determination in order to justify opposing such movements in practice fell to those Bolsheviks who had always held reservations about Lenin's theory, preferring to stress proletarian class unity and de-emphasize nationality. The first clear statement of what would become Soviet theory and practice, the distinction between "genuine" autonomy or independence movements based on the interest of the working class and other nationalisms which were declared to be mere cloaks for counter-revolution, came in an article by Stalin on the Ukrainian issue on December 12, 1917. It was restated, more succinctly and as a general principle, in this speech to the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets.*

## REPORT ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

January 15

(Newspaper Report)

One of the questions that was particularly agitating Russia just now, the speaker said, was the national question. Its importance was enhanced by the fact that the Great Russians did not constitute an absolute majority of the population of Russia and were surrounded by a ring of other, "non-sovereign" peoples, the inhabitants of the border regions.

The tsarist government realized the importance of the national question and tried to handle the affairs of the nationalities with a rod of iron. It carried out a policy of forcible Russification of the border peoples, and its method of action was the banning of native languages, pogroms and other forms of persecution.

Kerensky's coalition government abolished these national disabilities, but, because of its class character, it was incapable of a full solution of the national question. The government of the early period of the revolution not only did not adopt the course of completely emancipating the nations, but in many instances it did not hesitate to resort to repressive measures to crush the national movement, as was the case with the Ukraine and Finland.

The Soviet Government alone publicly proclaimed the right of all nations to self-determination, including complete secession from Russia. The new government proved to be more radical in this respect than even the national groups within some of the nations.

Nevertheless, a series of conflicts arose between the Council of People's Commissars and the border regions. They arose, however, not over issues of a national character, but over the question of power. The speaker cited a number of examples of how the bourgeois nationalist governments, hastily formed in the border regions and composed of representatives of the upper sections of the propertied classes, endeavoured, under the guise of settling their national problems, to carry on a definite struggle against the Soviet and other revolutionary organizations. All these conflicts between the border regions and the central Soviet Government were rooted in the question of power. And if the bourgeois elements of this or that region sought to lend a national colouring to these conflicts, it was only because it was advantageous to them to do so, since it was convenient for them to conceal behind a national cloak the fight against the power of the labouring masses within their region.

As an illustration, the speaker dwelt in detail on the Rada, convincingly showing how the principle of self-determination was being exploited by the bourgeois chauvinist elements in the Ukraine in their imperialist class interests.

All this pointed to the necessity of interpreting the principle of self-determination as the right to self-determination not of the bourgeoisie, but of the labouring masses of the given nation. The principle of self-determination should be a means in the struggle for socialism and should be subordinated to the principles of socialism.

On the question of a federal structure of the Russian Republic, the speaker said that the supreme organ of the Soviet Federation must be the Congress of Soviets. In the intervals between congresses its functions should be vested in the Central Executive Committee.

Stalin, *Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 30-32.



### PATRIARCH TIKHON ANATHEMIZES THE BOLSHEVIKS AND CALLS FOR DEFENSE OF THE CHURCH

January 19 (February 1) 1918

*The Orthodox Church and its prerogatives came under vigorous attack by the government, which was ideologically hostile to religion and also mistrusted the Church as a supporter of conservative social and political viewpoints. Patriarch Tikhon (the patriarchate had been reestablished after the February Revolution) struck back at the Bolsheviks, cataloging their offenses and calling the faithful to the defense of the Church. Three days later instructions were issued for defense against the seizure of Church property. See the government's decree on religion, January 20 (below).*

Tikhon,

By the grace of God Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, to the beloved in the Lord, archpriests, priests and all faithful children of the Russian Orthodox Church

‘May the Lord deliver us from this evil’ Galatians 1.4

The Holy Orthodox Church of Christ in Russia is passing through grievous times: a persecution of Christian truth has been undertaken by the open and secret enemies of that truth who strive to destroy Christianity and instead of Christian love everywhere sow the seeds of hatred, enmity and fratricidal strife.

The precepts of Christ of love for one's neighbour are forgotten and flouted; daily we receive reports of the terrible and savage murders of quite innocent people, even people on

their sick beds, guilty only of doing their duty to their country and devoting all their energy to the good of the people. All this is done not only under the cover of night but even openly in broad daylight with a hitherto unheard of insolence and merciless cruelty, without any trial and flouting every right and legality; it is done in our time in almost every town and village of our country, in the capitals and distant provinces (in Petrograd, Moscow, Irkutsk, Sevastopol, etc.).

All this fills our heart with the deep and painful grief and obliges us to address ourself to these dregs of humanity and a stern denunciation and warning according to the instruction of the apostle 'rebuke them that sin before all that others also may fear' (1 Timothy 5.20).

Come to your senses, you madmen, cease your bloody massacres. What you are doing is not only cruel, it is truly the doing of Satan for which Hell's fire awaits you in the next life beyond the grave and the awful curse of posterity in this life on earth.

By the authority vested in us by God we forbid you the sacraments, anathematise you if you bear Christian names and are orthodox by birth.

We adjure all true children of the Orthodox Church to have no dealings with these dregs of humanity: 'Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person' (1 Cor. 5.13).

A most cruel persecution has also been launched against the Holy Church: the sacraments consecrating the birth of man or blessing christian marriage are openly declared unnecessary and superfluous, holy churches are subjected to destruction by guns (the holy cathedrals of the Moscow Kremlin) or pillaging and desecration (the chapel of the Saviour of Petrograd); monasteries deemed holy by a christian people (like the Alexander-Nevsky and Pochaevsky monasteries) are seized by the godless rulers of darkness of this age and declared public property; schools maintained by the Church for training priests and religious instructors are declared superfluous and are turned into schools of atheism or even hotbeds of immorality.

The property of monasteries and churches has been seized on the pretext that they are the property of the people, but without any right or even the desire to consult the legal will of the people themselves. And finally, the power that promised to bring justice and truth to Russia, to guarantee freedom and good order, everywhere demonstrates nothing but the most unbridled licence and ceaseless violence to all and in particular the Orthodox Church.

What limits are there to this mockery of the Church of Christ? How and by what means can this attack by her bitter foes be halted?

We call upon you all, believers and true children of the Church: rise up in defence of our insulted and oppressed Holy Mother.

The enemies of the church seize power over it and its property by force of arms—oppose them with the force of your faith, a mighty cry of the whole people which will halt the madmen and show them that they have no right to call themselves the champions of the people's good, the builders of a new life at the behest of the people's reason, for they are working directly against the conscience of the people.

And if it is necessary to suffer in the cause of Christ, we call upon you, beloved children of the Church, to accept these sufferings with the words of the Apostle 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?' (Romans 8.35).

And you brother archpriests and priests, do not delay your spiritual action for even an hour, with burning faith call upon your children to defend the trampled rights of the Orthodox Church, set up without delay spiritual unions, call them to join voluntarily the ranks of the spiritual warriors who will oppose the external force with the force of their holy inspiration, and we firmly trust that the enemies of the Church of Christ will be shamed and dispersed by the strength of Christ's cross, for the immutable promise of the divine bearer of the cross himself was 'I shall build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it' (Matthew 16.18).

# SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE, CHURCH AND SCHOOLS, AND RELIGIOUS RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

January 20 (February 2) 1918

*This act separating church and state was intended to weaken the former by making church functioning more difficult as well as by confiscating property. All schools had been transferred to the Commissariat of Enlightenment by a decree of December 11 (24), 1917. Despite the moderate, even neutral terms about freedom of religion, the regime launched a vigorous attack on religions. See also the Patriarch's attack on the Bolsheviks, above (January 19), which probably is related since the Commissariat of Justice had approved this decree on that day. Several later, erroneous, dates are assigned to this decree because of repeated publication in the days following.*

1. The Church is separated from the State.

2. No local law which would impose restraint upon, or limit, freedom of conscience or establish any advantages or privileges on the ground of religious belief may be promulgated within the borders of the Republic.

3. Each citizen is free to profess any or no religion. Forfeiture of civil rights as the result of professing any or no religion is revoked.

Note.—The mention in official papers of the profession by citizens of any of no religion is abolished.

4. The actions of Government or other public bodies shall not be accompanied by any religious services or ceremonies.

5. Freedom to fulfil religious duties of any kind shall be allowed so long as they do not interfere with public order and do not involve an encroachment upon the rights of citizens of the Soviet Republic. If they do so, local authorities may take all necessary measures to secure public order and safety.

6. No person may evade his duties as a citizen on the ground of religious convictions.

Local courts may make exceptions to this rule, in that they may assign one form of duty instead of another.

7. Religious oaths are abolished.

In cases where it is necessary, a solemn promise only shall be given.

8. Documents of civil status shall be drawn up by the civil authorities, by the Department of Registration of Marriages and Births.

9. The schools are separated from the Church.

Religious teaching is prohibited in all State, public and private educational establishments where a general education is given. Citizens may teach and be taught religion privately.

10. All churches and religious societies are subject to the general rules respecting private societies and unions and shall not enjoy any advantages or receive any subsidies either from the State or from local autonomous and self-governing institutions.

11. Compulsory collections and levies in favour of churches or religious societies, the use of measures of compulsion and the infliction of punishment by these societies upon their members is prohibited.

12. Churches and religious societies may not own property.

They do not possess the rights of a juridical person.

13. All property belonging to churches and religious societies existing in Russia is declared to be the property of the people.

Buildings and objects which are intended specially for religious worship shall be handed over by special decisions of local or central authorities for the free use of the religious societies concerned.

*Certain Legislation Respecting Religion* , pp. 3-4.

## ANNULMENT OF STATE LOANS

January 21 (February 3) 1918

*Annulment of state loans was one of the major specific points in pre-revolutionary Bolshevik financial "programs" (along with nationalization of banking —see December 14, 1917). The main impact of this decree was foreign rather than internal (where it was only one of many aimed at destroying the financial basis of the bourgeoisie). The annulment of foreign loans became an impediment to Soviet foreign relations for many years. This decree was approved by the Central Executive Committee on January 21 (February 3), 1918; it is often dated to January 26 or January 28 (February 8 or 10), the dates of newspaper publication.*

## ANNULMENT OF GOVERNMENT LOANS

(1) All Government loans incurred by the Governments of the Russian landowners and the Russian bourgeoisie and enumerated in a specially published list are annulled as from December, 1917. The December coupons of the said loans will not be cashed.

(2) Similarly all securities held by the above governments against loans of the various enterprises and authorities are declared annulled.

(3) All foreign loans are annulled unconditionally and without exception.

(4) The short term bonds and Treasury bills of the State remain valid. Interest will not be paid but the bonds remain in circulation as credit notes.

(5) Small holders, who have less than 10,000 roubles nominal value of annulled State paper of the internal loans, shall receive in place of them certificates issued in their favour entitling them to the new loan of the Russian Socialist Federation of Soviet Republics. Particulars of the loan will be issued separately.

(6) Credits in the State Savings Banks and interest on them shall not be touched. All bonds of the annulled loans which are held by the Savings' Banks are to be converted to book debts of the R.S.F.S.R.

(7) Co-operative, local government and other communal and democratic institutions which possess bonds of the annulled loans will be compensated in accordance with such rules as shall be drawn up by the Supreme Economic Council together with the representatives of these institutions in so far as such bonds are proved to have been acquired before the publication of this decree.

Note: Local organs of the Supreme Economic Council will determine which local institutions fall within the category of communal or democratic.

(8) The Supreme Economic Council shall supervise the liquidation of the Government loans.

(9) The liquidation of the loans shall be carried out by the State Bank, which shall also begin the registration of all the Government loan bonds and other securities—whether they are declared annulled or not—in the hands of their various possessors.

(10) The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies shall form commissions in conjunction with the local Economic Councils in order to determine who is a small holder within the meaning of this decree. These commissions have the right to declare as annulled even such credits in the Savings Bank as are below 5,000 roubles if they were not obtained by work.

Astrov, Vol. 2, p. 476, and *Dekrety*, I, pp. 386-387.



## INTRODUCTION OF A NEW CALENDAR

January 24 (February 6) 1918

*Among the many decrees introduced to modernize Russia was one switching to the Western (Gregorian, New Style) calendar, which was then thirteen days ahead of the Russian (Julian, Old Style) calendar. Only the first part is given here.*

## DECREE ON THE INTRODUCTION INTO RUSSIA OF THE WEST EUROPEAN CALENDAR

With the goal of establishing in Russia the same method of calculating time used by almost all cultured nations, the Council of People's Commissars resolves to introduce a new calendar into civil use, after the end of January of this year. Accordingly:

1) The first day after January 31 of this year will be counted not as February 1 but as February 14, the second day counted as February 15, and so on.... [The remainder of the decree established rules for calculating due dates for contractual and legal obligations, interest and debt payments, salaries, etc.]

*Dekrety*, I, pp. 404-405.



## SOCIALIZATION OF THE LAND

January 27 (February 9) 1918

*The "Fundamental Law on Socialization of the Land" elaborated the provisions of the Decree on Land (October 26, above). It abolished private land ownership and set forth rules for land use. The general rules, section one, were approved by the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets on January 18 (31). An additional seven sections (articles 20-52) detail conditions of land use and were approved by the Central Executive Committee on January 27 (February 9), making up the complete law. The later sections spelling out land use in detail are not included here. Both actual ownership and the state's prejudice in favor of collective farming were clarified by yet a third set of regulations on land issued February 14, 1919 (see below).*

## FUNDAMENTAL LAW ON SOCIALIZATION OF THE LAND

## Section I

## GENERAL RULES

Art. 1. All private ownership of the soil, the minerals, the waters, forests and living natural forces is for ever abolished within the territory of the All-Russian Federation of Soviet Republics.

Art. 2. The soil is from now on transferred to the use of the whole working population without any compensation, open or hidden.

Art. 3. The right to the use of the soil appertains only to those who themselves cultivate it in so far as special exceptions laid down in this law are not concerned.

Art. 4. The right to the use of the soil must not be curtailed on grounds of sex, religious belief, nationality or citizenship.

Art. 5. The right of disposal of minerals, forests, waters and living natural forces is transferred according to their importance to the local, district, provincial or Federal Soviet power, under the control of the latter. The method of using them and the disposal of the minerals, forests, waters and living natural forces will be laid down in a separate law.

Art. 6. The whole of the privately owned live stock and agricultural equipment is transferred without any compensation from the hands of the non-working occupiers to the control of the agricultural departments of the local, district, provincial or Federation Soviets according to its importance.

Art. 7. All buildings on the farms referred to in paragraph 6, as also all agricultural workshops attached to them are transferred without any compensation into the control of the local, district, provincial or Federal Soviets—according to their importance.

Art. 8. All persons incapable of work, who, on account of this law concerning the expropriation of lands, forests, inventory and the rest of the property on these land, lose all means of subsistence, will receive an income equivalent to the present soldier's pension; subject to confirmation by the local courts and the Land Committees of the Soviets, until such time as a general law about the insurance of citizens not able to work shall be promulgated. (This they shall receive until their death or until their coming of age.)

Art. 9. The division of the cultivable soil amongst those who work it is to be undertaken by the village, local, district, provincial, central and Federal Land Committees of the Soviets according to the importance of the land concerned.

Art. 10. The Land Committees of the Central and Federal Soviets will dispose of the Reserve Land Fund in each Republic.

Art. 11. In addition to the just division of the cultivable land amongst the working agricultural population and in addition to the application of the most productive methods of working the national riches, the Land Committees of the local and central Soviets concerned with the disposal of the soil are to perform the following tasks, amongst others:

(a) Creation of conditions which will further the growth of productive forces on the land, increase the productivity of the soil, improve agricultural technique and finally increase the knowledge of agriculture amongst the working masses of the agricultural population.

(b) Creation of a Reserve Fund from lands which are of importance agriculturally.

(c) Promotion of agricultural industries such as horticulture, bee keeping, cultivation of vegetables, cattle breeding, dairy farming, etc.

(d) Speeding up the substitution of a more, in place of a less, productive farming system in the various zones by means of the uniform transfer of the working cultivators.

(e) Promotion of collective methods of cultivation at the expense of individual household cultivation, in view of the fact that collective farming is more profitable in regard both to labour and to yield, and in order thereby to hasten the transition to socialist economy.

Art. 12. The division of the soil amongst those who cultivate it must follow the principle of equalisation on the basis of working strength. This principle is to be applied to the system of land tenure—which arose historically and is now in existence in the various districts—in such a way that the standard of consumption and of labour should not exceed the working capacity of the available labour forces and should at the same time secure a sufficient subsistence to the peasant's family.

Art. 13. Personal labour is the general, fundamental source of the right to use the cultivable soil. Apart from this the organs of the Soviet Government are at liberty to increase agricultural productivity by taking definite areas from the Land Reserve Fund, made up of the former estates of the monasteries, the treasury, the imperial family, the Tsar and the landowners, and allowing them to be cultivated by workers paid by the State. (Establishment of model farms or experimental and model fields.) This labour is subject to the general regulations for workers' control.

Art. 14. All citizens who are occupied in agriculture shall be insured at the cost of the State, against illness, death, old age and accidents which render them incapable of work.

Art. 15. All cultivators of the land incapable of labour, together with the members of their family unable to work must be kept at the cost of the organs of the Soviet Government.

Art. 16. Every working peasant household must be insured against fire, cattle murrain, bad harvests, drought, hail and other mischances on the basis of a mutual Soviet reinsurance.

Art. 17. The excess of receipts due to the natural fertility of the best land or to a more favourable site in regard to the market shall be placed at the disposal of the organs of the Soviet Government for distribution according to the needs of all.

Art. 18. Trading in agricultural machinery and seeds shall be the monopoly of the Soviet Government.

Art. 19. Commerce in grain—within the country and abroad—shall be a State monopoly.

## Section II

### WHO HAS THE RIGHT TO USE THE LAND

Art. 20. Separate portions of the land surface within the Russian Soviet Federated Republic may be used for public and private needs:

A) For educational and cultural purposes.

1. The state in the person of organs of Soviet power (federal, oblast, provincial, uезд, volost and village).

2. Public organizations (under the supervision and with the authorization of local Soviet authorities).

B) For agricultural purposes.

3. Agricultural communes.

4. Agricultural partnerships.

5. Village associations.

6. Families and individuals.

C) For construction purposes.

7. Organs of Soviet power.

8. Public organizations, separate families and personas (if the construction is not intended as a means for profit making).

9. Trade, industrial and transport institutions (with special permission and under the supervision of Soviet authorities).

D) For roads and transportation construction.

10. Organs of Soviet power (federal, oblast, provincial, uезд, volost and village, depending on the importance of the roads).

Astrov, Vol. 2, pp. 471-472 (Section I) and *Dekrety*, I, pp. 409-410 (Section II).



## NO WAR NO PEACE! TROTSKY AT BREST-LITOVSK DECLARES

### RUSSIA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE WAR ENDED

January 28 (February 10) 1918

*The long and difficult peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk resulted in German peace terms which most of the Soviet leaders found unacceptable. The leadership was badly divided over how to react (see above, January 7). Trotsky presented as an alternative simply to declare that Russia was withdrawing from the war but refusing to sign a treaty; this was tried. It did not work, and Germany soon opened an offensive against a helpless Russia.*

It was the task of the sub-commission, as we understood it, to provide an answer to the question to what extent the frontier proposed by the other side could secure to the Russian people, even in a minimum degree, the right of self-determination. We have heard the reports of our representatives on the territorial sub-commission and, after prolonged discussion and

a thorough examination of the question, we have come to the conclusion that the hour of decision has struck. The peoples are impatiently awaiting the results of the peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. They are asking, when will there be an end to this unparalleled self-destruction of humanity provoked by the selfish and ambitious ruling classes of all countries. If ever the war was being fought in self-defence, that has long ceased to be true for either side. When Great Britain seizes African colonies, Baghdad and Jerusalem, that is no longer a war of self-defence; when Germany occupies Serbia, Belgium, Poland, Lithuania, and Rumania, and seizes the Moon Islands, that too is not a war of defence. That is a struggle for the partition of the world. Now it is clear, clearer than ever before.

We do not wish to take part any longer in this purely imperialist war, in which the claims of the propertied classes are being paid in blood. We are as implacably opposed to the imperialism of one camp as to the other, and we are no longer willing to shed the blood of our soldiers to defend the interests of one imperialist side against the other.

While awaiting the time, which we hope is not far off, when the oppressed working classes of all countries will take power into their own hands, as the working people of Russia have done, we are withdrawing our army and our people from the war. Our peasant-soldiers must return to their land, so that they can this spring cultivate the soil which the revolution took from the landlords and gave to the peasants. Our workers-soldiers must return to the workshops to produce there, not the weapons of destruction, but tools for creative labour, and together with the peasants build a new socialist economy.

We are withdrawing from the war. We are informing all peoples and all Governments of this. We are issuing orders for the complete demobilization of our armies now confronting the German, Austro-Hungarian, Turkish, and Bulgarian troops. We expect and firmly believe that other peoples will soon follow our example. At the same time we declare that the terms of peace proposed by the Governments of Germany and Austria-Hungary are basically opposed to the interests of all peoples. These terms will be rejected by the working masses of all countries, including even the peoples of Austria-Hungary and Germany. The peoples of Poland, the Ukraine, Lithuania, Courland, and Estonia regard these conditions as a violation of their will, while or the Russian people themselves they represent a permanent threat. The popular masses of the entire world, guided by political consciousness or by moral instinct, reject these conditions, in expectation of the day when the working classes of all countries will establish their own standards of the peaceful co-existence and friendly co-operation of peoples. We refuse to give our sanction to the conditions which German and Austro-Hungarian imperialism writes with the sword on the body of living peoples. We cannot put the signature of the Russian revolution to conditions which carry with them oppression, misfortune, and misery to millions of human beings.

The Governments of Germany and Austria-Hungary want to rule over lands and peoples by the right of armed conquest. Let them do their work openly. We cannot approve violence. We are withdrawing from the war but we are compelled to refuse to sign the treaty of peace.

In connexion with this statement, I am handing to the joint delegations the following written and signed declaration:

In the name of the Council of People's Commissars, the Government of the Russian Federal Republic informs the Governments and peoples of the countries at war with us, and of the Allied and neutral countries that, while refusing to sign an annexationist peace, Russia, for its part, declares the state of war with Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey at an end. At the same time, an order is being given for the complete demobilization of the Russian troops along the entire front.

(Signed) L. Trotsky, A. Joffe,  
M. Pokrovsky,  
A. Bitsenko, V. Karelin

## PEACE TREATY OF BREST-LITOVSK

March 3, 1918

*The effort simply to declare the war over did not work. German armies resumed offensive actions and the Soviet government quickly capitulated; on February 24 it telegraphed acceptance of the German peace terms. When meetings resumed at Brest-Litovsk, these terms proved even more onerous than before. The Soviet delegation registered a feeble protest and signed. Most of the Western areas of the Russian empire, including the Ukraine, now either came under direct control of the Central Powers or became independent with German support. Other territories passed to Turkey. Important industrial and agricultural regions were lost. Lenin, however, accepted the peace not only because there was not any choice, but because of confidence that it would be nullified by a proletarian revolution in Germany. In fact it was nullified by Germany's defeat by the Allies. In addition to the Treaty itself, several appendices were attached (not given here) dealing in detail with borders, economic and customs questions, and legal issues.*

Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey for the one part, and Russia for the other part, being in accord to terminate the state of war, and to enter into peace negotiations as speedily as possible, have appointed as plenipotentiaries:

*On the part of the Imperial German Government:*

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Actual Imperial Privy Councillor, Herr Richard von Kuhlmann;

The Imperial Envoy and Minister Plenipotentiary, Dr. von Rosenberg;

Royal Prussian Major General Hoffman, Chief of the General Staff of the Commander-in-Chief of the East;

Naval Captain Horn;

*On the part of the Imperial and Royal Joint Austro-Hungarian Government:*

The Minister of the Imperial and Royal House and for Foreign Affairs, the Privy Councillor of His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty, Ottokar Count Czernin von und zu Chudenitz;

The Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty, the Privy Councillor, Kajetan Mery von Kapos-Mere;

General of Infantry, His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty's Privy Councillor, Maximilian Csicseric von Bacsany;

*On the part of the Royal Bulgarian Government:*

The Royal Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Vienna, Andrea Tosheff;

Colonel Peter Gantschew of the General Staff, Royal Bulgarian Military Envoy Plenipotentiary to His Majesty the German Emperor and Aide-de-Camp of His Majesty the King of the Bulgarians;

The Royal Bulgarian First Legation Secretary, Dr. Theodore Anastassof;

*On the part of the Imperial Ottoman Government:*

His Highness Ibrahim Hakki Pasha, former Grand-Vizier, Member of the Ottoman Senate, Envoy Plenipotentiary of His Majesty the Sultan to Berlin;

His Excellency, Zeki Pasha, General of Cavalry, Adjutant General of His Majesty the Sultan, and Military Envoy Plenipotentiary to His Majesty the German Emperor;

*On the part of the Russian Federal Soviet-Republic:*

Grigory Iakovlevich Sokolnikov, Member of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies;

Lev Mikhailovich Karakhan, Member of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies;

Georgy Vassilievich Chicherin, Assistant to the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs; Grigory Ivanovich Petrovsky, People's Commissar for Internal Affairs.

The Plenipotentiaries met in Brest-Litovsk to enter into peace negotiations, and after presentation of their credentials, and finding them in good and proper form, have agreed upon the following stipulations:

#### ARTICLE I.

Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey, for the one part, and Russia, for the other part, declare that the state of war between them has ceased. They are resolved to live henceforth in peace and amity with one another.

#### ARTICLE II.

The contracting parties will refrain from any agitation or propaganda against the Government or the public and military institutions of the other party. In so far as this obligation devolves upon Russia, it holds good also for the territories occupied by the Powers of the Quadruple Alliance.

#### ARTICLE III.

The territories lying to the west of the line agreed upon by the contracting parties which formerly belonged to Russia, will no longer be subject to Russian sovereignty; the line agreed upon is traced on the map submitted as an essential part of this treaty of peace (Annex 1). The exact fixation of the line will be established by a Russo-German commission.

No obligations whatever toward Russia shall devolve upon the territories referred to, arising from the fact that they formerly belonged to Russia.

Russia refrains from all interference in the internal relations of these territories. Germany and Austria-Hungary propose to determine the future status of these territories in agreement with their population.

#### ARTICLE IV.

As soon as a general peace is concluded and Russian demobilization is carried out completely, Germany will evacuate the territory lying to the east of the line designated in paragraph 1 of Article III, in so far as Article VI does not determine otherwise.

Russia will do all within her power to insure the immediate evacuation of the provinces of eastern Anatolia and their lawful return to Turkey.

The districts of Erdehan, Kars, and Batum will likewise and without delay be cleared of the Russian troops. Russia will not interfere in the reorganization of the national and international relations of these districts, but leave it to the population of these districts, to carry out this reorganization in agreement with the neighboring States, especially with Turkey.

#### ARTICLE V.

Russia will, without delay, carry out the full demobilization of her army inclusive of those units recently organized by the present Government.

Furthermore, Russia will either bring her warships into Russian ports and there detain them until the day of the conclusion of a general peace, or disarm them forthwith. Warships of the States which continue in the state of war with the Powers of the Quadruple Alliance, in so far as they are within Russian sovereignty, will be treated as Russian warships.

The barred zone in the Arctic Ocean continues as such until the conclusion of a general peace. In the Baltic sea, and, as far as Russian power extends within the Black sea, removal of the mines will be proceeded with at once. Merchant navigation within these maritime regions is free and will be resumed at once. Mixed commissions will be organized to formulate the more detailed regulations, especially to inform merchant ships with regard to restricted lanes. The navigation lanes are always to be kept free from floating mines.

## ARTICLE VI.

Russia obligates herself to conclude peace at once with the Ukrainian People's Republic and to recognize the treaty of peace between that State and the Powers of the Quadruple Alliance. The Ukrainian territory will, without delay, be cleared of Russian troops and the Russian Red Guard. Russia is to put an end to all agitation or propaganda against the Government or the public institutions of the Ukrainian People's Republic.

Esthonia and Livonia will likewise, without delay, be cleared of Russian troops and the Russian Red Guard. The eastern boundary of Esthonia runs, in general, along the river Narwa. The eastern boundary of Livonia crosses, in general, lakes Peipus and Pskow, to the southwestern corner of the latter, then across Lake Luban in the direction of Livenhof on the Dvina. Esthonia and Livonia will be occupied by a German police force until security is insured by proper national institutions and until public order has been established. Russia will liberate at once all arrested or deported inhabitants of Esthonia and Livonia, and insures the safe return of all deported Esthonians and Livonians.

Finland and the Aaland Islands will immediately be cleared of Russian troops and the Russian Red Guard, and the Finnish ports of the Russian fleet and of the Russian naval forces. So long as the ice prevents the transfer of warships into Russian ports, only limited forces will remain on board the warships. Russia is to put an end to all agitation or propaganda against the Government or the public institutions of Finland.

The fortresses built on the Aaland Islands are to be removed as soon as possible. As regards the permanent non-fortification of these islands as well as their further treatment in respect to military and technical navigation matters, a special agreement is to be concluded between Germany, Finland, Russia, and Sweden; there exists an understanding to the effect that, upon Germany's desire, still other countries bordering upon the Baltic Sea would be consulted in this matter.

## ARTICLE VII.

In view of the fact that Persia and Afghanistan are free and independent States, the contracting parties obligate themselves to respect the political and economic independence and the territorial integrity of these States.

## ARTICLE VIII.

The prisoners of war of both parties will be released to return to their homeland. The settlement of the questions connected therewith will be effected through the special treaties provided for in Article XII.

## ARTICLE IX.

The contracting parties mutually renounce compensation for their war expenses, i.e., of the public expenditures for the conduct of the war, as well as compensation for war losses, i.e., such losses as were caused them and their nationals within the war zones by military measures, inclusive of all requisitions effected in enemy country.

## ARTICLE X.

Diplomatic and consular relations between the contracting parties will be resumed immediately upon the ratification of the treaty of peace. As regards the reciprocal admission of consuls, separate agreements are reserved.

## ARTICLE XI.

As regards the economic relations between the Powers of the Quadruple Alliance and Russia the regulations contained in Appendices II-V are determinative, namely Appendix II for the Russo-German, Appendix III for the Russo-Austro-Hungarian, Appendix IV for the Russo-Bulgarian, and Appendix V for the Russo-Turkish relations.

## ARTICLE XII.

The reestablishment of public and private legal relations, the exchange of war prisoners and interned civilians, the question of amnesty as well as the question anent the treatment of merchant ships which have come into the power of the opponent, will be regulated in separate treaties with Russia which form an essential part of the general treaty of peace, and, as far as possible, go into force simultaneously with the latter.

## ARTICLE XIII.

In the interpretation of this treaty, the German and Russian texts are authoritative for the relations between Germany and Russia; the German, the Hungarian, and Russian texts for the relations between Austria-Hungary and Russia; the Bulgarian and Russian texts for the relations between Bulgaria and Russia; and the Turkish and Russian texts for the relations between Turkey and Russia.

## ARTICLE XIV.

The present treaty of peace will be ratified. The documents of ratification shall, as soon as possible, be exchanged in Berlin. The Russian Government obligates itself, upon the desire of one of the Powers of the Quadruple Alliance, to execute the exchange of the documents of ratification, within a period of two weeks. Unless otherwise provided for in its articles, in its annexes, or in the additional treaties, the treaty of peace enters into force at the moment of its ratification.

In testimony whereof the Plenipotentiaries have signed this treaty with their own hand. Executed in quintuplicate at Brest-Litovsk, 3 March, 1918.

*Texts of the Russian "Peace," pp. 13-21.*



TROTSKY INQUIRES ABOUT AMERICAN ASSISTANCE  
AGAINST GERMANY AND JAPAN  
March 5, 1918

*Even after signing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk some Soviet leaders still sought ways to avoid the onerous treaty, and all feared Germany might yet undertake their overthrow. Moreover, concern over Japanese ambitions was growing. They therefore maintained liaisons with unofficial and semi-official Allied representatives in Russia, such as Colonel Raymond Robbins, who was in Russia with the American Red Cross and had become an important point of contact with the new government. Trotsky used Robbins to transmit an inquiry concerning possible American support. Similar approaches apparently were made to other Allied representatives. The inquiry shows how fluid Soviet policy remained to this point, and the role of unofficial and semi-official contacts at a time when the Allies did not recognize the Soviet government.*

In case (a) the All-Russian Congress of the Soviets will refuse to ratify the peace treaty with Germany, or (b) if the German government, breaking the peace treaty, will renew the offensive in order to continue its robbers' raid, or (c) if the Soviet government will be forced by the actions of Germany to renounce the peace treaty—before or after its ratification—and to renew hostilities—[sic]



In all these cases it is very important for the military and political plans of the Soviet power for replies to be given to the following questions:

1. Can the Soviet government rely on the support of the United States of North America, Great Britain, and France in its struggle against Germany?

2. What kind of support could be furnished in the nearest future, and on what conditions—military equipment, transportation supplies, living necessities?

3. What kind of support would be furnished particularly and especially by the United States?

Should Japan—in consequence of an open or tacit understanding with Germany or without such an understanding—attempt to seize Vladivostok and the Eastern-Siberian Railway, which would threaten to cut off Russia from the Pacific Ocean and would greatly impede the concentration of Soviet troops toward the East about the Urals—in such case what steps would be taken by the other allies, particularly and especially by the United States, to prevent a Japanese landing on our Far East and to insure uninterrupted communications with Russia through the Siberian route?

In the opinion of the Government of the United States, to what extent—under the above-mentioned circumstances—would aid be assured from Great Britain through Murmansk and Archangel? What steps could the Government of Great Britain undertake in order to assure this aid and thereby to undermine the foundation of the rumors of the hostile plans against Russia on the part of Great Britain in the nearest future?

All these questions are conditioned with the self-understood assumption that the internal and foreign policies of the Soviet government will continue to be directed in accord with the principles of international socialism and that the Soviet government retains its complete independence of all non-socialist governments.

*Congressional Record*, January 29, 1919, p. 2336.



# CHANGE OF THE PARTY NAME TO "COMMUNIST" AND DECISION TO REVISE THE PARTY PROGRAM

March 8, 1918

*The Seventh Special Party Congress, called to approve the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, also changed the name of the party. This had been advocated by Lenin in order to emphasize the break with the past and other social-democratic parties. The success of the party in obtaining power required that the party program be updated; this was done at the Eighth Party Congress (see below, March 22, 1919). Lenin wrote the resolution for the Congress. Henceforth "Communist" rather than "Bolshevik" is the proper term, but the latter continued to be used through the Civil War and is commonly used by historians writing about this period.*

**RESOLUTION ON CHANGING THE NAME OF THE PARTY AND THE PARTY PROGRAMME**  
The Congress resolves that our Party (the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party of Bolsheviks) be named henceforth the *Russian Communist Party*, with the word "Bolsheviks" added in brackets.

The Congress resolves to change the Programme of our Party, re-editing the theoretical part or adding to it a definition of imperialism and the era of the international socialist revolution that has begun.

Following this, the change in the political part of our Programme must consist in the most accurate and comprehensive definition possible of the new type of state, the Soviet Republic, as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat and as a continuation of those achievements of the world working-class revolution which the Paris Commune began. The Programme must show that our Party does not reject the use even of bourgeois parliamentarism, should the course of the struggle push us back, for a time, to this historical stage which our revolution has now passed. But in any case and under all circumstances the Party will strive for a Soviet Republic as the highest, from the standpoint of democracy, type of state, as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of abolition of the exploiters' yoke and of suppression of their resistance.

The economic, including agrarian, and educational and other parts of our Programme must be recast in the same spirit and direction. The centre of gravity must be a precise definition of the economic and other reforms begun by our Soviet power, with a definite statement of the immediate definite tasks which Soviet power has set itself, and which proceed from the practical steps we have already taken towards expropriating the expropriators.

The Congress instructs the special commission to compile, with the utmost urgency, a programme for our Party based on the points laid down and to have it approved as the Programme of our Party.

Lenin, Vol. 27, pp. 140-141.



### THE FUTURISTS AND PUBLIC ART: "LET THE STREETS BE A FEAST OF ART FOR ALL"

March 15, 1918

*Enthusiasm over the role to be played by art in transforming Russia, and apparent support from the Commissariat of Enlightenment, led many avant-garde artists to participate in the public spectacles and celebrations which became commonplace after the revolution. The following example of enthusiasm for art as a means of transforming public life, by Vladimir Mayakovsky, David Burliuk and Vasily Kamensky, is from the Futurists' Journal, a collection of poems and proclamations. Printed as a broadside, it was pasted up on walls in Moscow, and apparently the "decree" was taken by many residents to be official. The authors (and others) were as good as their word, judging from Ilya Ehrenburg's description of May 1, 1918: "Moscow was decorated with futurist and suprematist canvases. On the shabby house fronts, on columned empire palaces, crazy squares were in conflict with rhombs; motley faces looked out with triangles instead of eyes."*

#### *Decree No. 1 on the Democratization of Art (The hoarding of literature and the painting of streets)*

Comrades and citizens, we, the leaders of Russian futurism—the revolutionary art of youth—declare:

1. From this day forward, with the abolition of tsardom, *the domicile of art* in the closets and sheds of human genius—palaces, galleries, salons, libraries, theaters—is *abrogated*.
2. In the name of the great march of equality for all, as far as culture is concerned, let the *Free Word* of creative personality be written on the corners of walls, fences, roofs, the

streets of our cities and villages, on the backs of automobiles, carriages, streetcars, and on the clothes of all citizens.

3. Let *pictures* (colors) be thrown, like colored rainbows, across streets and squares, from house to house, delighting, ennobling the eye (taste) of the passer-by.

Artists and writers have the immediate duty to get hold of their pots of paint, and with their masterly brushes, to illuminate, to paint all the sides, foreheads, and chests of cities, railway stations, and the ever-galloping herds of railway carriages.

From now on, let the citizen walking down the street enjoy at every moment the depths of thought of his great contemporaries, let him absorb the flowery gaudiness of this day's beautiful joy, let him listen to music—the melody, the roar, the buzz—of excellent composers everywhere.

Let the streets be a feast of art for all.

And if all this comes to pass, in accordance with our word, everyone who goes out into the street will grow to be a giant and in wisdom, contemplating beauty instead of the present-day streets with their iron books (signboards), where every page has been written on their signs by greed, the lust for mammon, calculated meanness and low obtuseness, all of which soil the soul and offend the eye. "All art—to all the people!"

The initial pasting up of the poems and hanging of pictures will take place in Moscow on the day our journal is published.

Mayakovsky, Kamensky, Burliuk

Woroszylski, p. 194.



#### THE "LEFT-WING" COMMUNISTS

April 4, 1918

*This manifesto laid forth the position of the "Left Communists." The latter constituted an important opposition within the party during the first half of 1918. They emerged in opposition to the peace treaty with Germany, and echoes of that are found here. However, this manifesto also marks their transition to criticism of economic policies which they feared represented a withdrawal from the radical communizing policies of the first months. They defended workers' control, nationalization of industry, and collectivist farming. Centered in the Moscow party organization and led initially by N. I. Bukharin, N. Osinsky and V. M. Smirnov, they continued to evolve and helped spawn several left opposition movements within the party down through 1921.*

#### THESES OF THE "LEFT COMMUNISTS" ON THE PRESENT MOMENT

From the editors. Every comrade who follows the life of the party with attention knows that, as early as January of the current year, there began to be serious disagreements concerning the issue of concluding peace with Germany.

These disagreements were twice discussed by the Central Committee along with party officials: first on January 7, and then on January 21, 1918. At these sessions two major trends were noted. The adherents of one, termed the "right," came out in favor of concluding peace as soon as possible on the terms being offered at the time, without allowing matters to come to a break-down in negotiations; the other, called the "left," advocated refusing to accept

these terms and conducting a revolutionary war. An intermediate faction was against signing the annexationist peace treaty, but also against waging war.

As is well known, initially the third, middle faction prevailed. After the start of the German advance, which was their response to the tactic of stopping the war without signing a peace treaty, the issue was put up for discussion again in the Central Committee and ultimately was decided in favor of the need to sign a peace treaty. This resulted in the minority, who insisted on waging war against German imperialism, leaving the Central Committee. Subsequently the comrades belonging to this faction resigned their official positions in organs of the Soviet State.

The final resolution of these disagreements was given its initial form by the Party Congress, convened in early March, and the Congress of Soviets, convened in mid-March. The Party Congress by a majority of 28, with 12 opposed and 4 abstaining, approved the tactics of the majority of the Central Committee and acknowledged that it was essential to acknowledge the peace. The Congress of Soviets ratified the peace treaty by a substantial majority.

The group of Left Bolsheviks, who publish the newspaper "Communist" in Petersburg, finding themselves in the minority at the Party Congress, did not, however, consider themselves justified in completely refusing to speak at the Congress of Soviets. A resolution was read at the Congress of Soviets, in the name of 58 delegates and 10 members of the Central Executive Committee, in which these Left Communists declared that they could not vote for ratification of peace, considering it disastrous for the fate of the Russian Revolution and International proletariat, but at the same time they acceded to party discipline and abstained rather than voting against ratification.

After ratification of the peace treaty, the discord within the party would seem, on the one hand, no longer to have any basis since ratification of peace, which was the sole point of dispute, became an accomplished and undeniable fact. On the other hand, however, the conclusion of peace provided the basis for the emergence of new disagreements. The conclusion of peace could not be a simple act of law, since it was an event that radically altered the whole political and economic situation. In the disputes concerning the conclusion of peace, two differing points of view on the goals of the Russian proletariat, two evaluations of the current political situation, had already begun to take shape. The conclusion of peace itself put the Russian revolution at a crossroads. The party majority wanted to follow one political path, the party minority—the left, proletarian communist wing—wanted to follow another.

At present it is still difficult to say to what extent these two paths will diverge. It is possible that the differences of opinion will become obsolete during discussions among the comrades. It is also possible that they will grow still deeper. In any event, the left wing does not consider it necessary or useful to conceal them. With this goal, the Moscow Oblast Bureau of the Russian Communist Party, which espouses a position placing it in the left wing of the Party, has made the pages of the paper it currently publishes available for discussion of these differences of opinion. In the theses (these theses were read and discussed at the joint meeting of the group of Left Communists and leading comrades of the party center on 4 April 1917) printed below, the editors express their opinions on the current political situation and the goals of the Russian working class.

1. Conclusion of the annexationist peace with Germany terminated the preceding period of the Russian revolution and began a new chapter. This [new situation] arose out of the open conflict between German imperialism and the Russian workers' and peasants' revolution, in which revolutionary international demands were opposed to the expansionist drives of the imperialists. As soon as this conflict had exacerbated the class struggle in Germany and Austria, which had been temporarily suppressed, German imperialism took decisive steps against the Soviet Republic. The German advance, the German ultimatum, and the annexationist peace were all forms and instruments of this onslaught.

2. At the beginning of March, the proletarian-peasant revolution faced a choice: either accept the war or reject it. The decisive majority of organizations of workers, soldiers, and peasants selected the latter path. This majority consisted of: a) exhausted soldiers who had lost their class identification; b) workers from the northern industrial belt of Russia, which was cut off from the southern sources of raw materials, coal, and food crops due to the general economic devastation, resulting in famine, acceleration of the disintegration of industry, unemployment, and interruption of the regular course of productive work, in turn leading to a tendency for the proletariat to lose its class identification (eroding its class solidarity and consciousness) as well as to a decrease in its class fighting capacity; and finally c) peasants of the northern and central industrial area, exhausted by the war, poor harvest, food shortages, and interruption of the operation of urban industries. The workers and the peasants of the economically more viable and better supplied with grain regions in the south, southeast and Urals were, in the majority of cases, in favor of fighting, but they were not in the majority. Peace was concluded in order to preserve the industrial north, which had previously been the center of the revolution, but which was virtually cut off from the grain-producing and industrial south.

3. It would be ridiculous to preach "refusal on principle" to accept this peace, as do the Left Socialist Revolutionaries. The conclusion of this peace, as the victory of the backward and exhausted strata of workers and peasants, is an objective fact, creating a new objective situation and a new configuration of class forces. The isolation of "Great Russia" from the Western Ukraine, impending isolation from the Ekaterinoslavsk and Donets regions, and the evacuation of Petersburg are objective facts of economic life. The economic concessions that the foreign imperialists will demand, starting with the peace treaty concluded in Brest-Litovsk, may also strongly influence the objective situation. Finally, the do-nothing "peace psychology" that has taken hold in the masses is also an objective political fact of today.

However, while they should take the situation created by the Peace of Brest into consideration, the proletarian Communists cannot base further decisions solely on these facts and thus remain at the level of consciousness of the backward, passive, do-nothing factions of the Russian proletariat or peasantry. They must define their goals on the basis of the interests of the workers of Russia as a whole and set these goals with a view to the growing international revolutionary movement. Their goal should not be the retention of the gains won by the workers and peasants within the now isolated territory of the Soviet Republic no matter what the cost, even at the cost of sacrificing the gains won in the remaining territory of Russia or of transforming the current Soviet state into a petty bourgeois state, but rather [their goal should be] the development and strengthening of all of Russia, as a detachment of the international workers revolution against international imperialists—this must be their basic political line.

4. Soviet Russia's conclusion of the annexationist peace with Germany undoubtedly temporarily weakened the strength of the international revolution and strengthened international imperialism. However, the main forces of international revolution continue to grow, will break their way through the dam that has been set up in their path, and will take advantage of certain consequences of the peace to strengthen the workers movement.

The conclusion of peace temporarily weakened the imperialists' urge for international bargaining. From their point of view Russia has been neutralized as a breeding place of world revolution. Fear of her influence has ceased to have its previous power to push the warring imperialists into each other's arms. This has given the German imperialists the opportunity to concentrate all their forces on the west and the struggle for full victory over the imperialists of the Allied nations. The latter in turn, in view of the division of Russia that has begun and the defeat that threatens them, must use all their strength to repulse the attack and to secure counter-annexations in the Far East and Turkey. To reinforce the territory they have seized, they must attempt to win in the major theater of the war. For these reasons the conclusion of peace has already led to intensification of the fighting between the imperialist powers.

5. The conclusion of the annexationist peace at this point in time has undoubtedly severely delayed the development of the psychological prerequisites for international revolution, which had matured by the spring of 1918. But it could not delay and, indeed, is to some extent strengthening the manifestation of the material contradictions that form the primary basis for a revolutionary explosion. The temporary setback in overt progress toward revolution will probably serve to make the revolution more extreme and intense when it does come.

Intensification of the fighting between the two alliances of imperialists will exhaust the overstrained forces of the warring states to the limit and will lead to new destruction of "human material" and to severe exacerbation of the general economic disintegration. Increase in material contradictions against a background of food and economic crises in the Central Powers (particularly Austria) cannot be delayed to any significant extent by annexation of the Ukraine, since throughout the entire critical period—the summer of 1918—German capital will not be able to obtain the required food and manufactured goods from there. The Ukraine has been annexed at the moment of the end of the grain procurement (which was poor to begin with), in the thick of the Civil War, at a moment when plants and mines lack the requisite manpower, coke, wood, gasoline, etc., and when the railroads lack coal and rolling stock. At the same time the German annexationist policy on the Eastern Front is giving rise to a series of nationalist conflicts, both in the German "immediate rear" (Poland, Ukraine, Latvia, Estonia), and within the Austrian national block (Galicia, Czechoslovakia) and also within the alliance of Central Powers.

On the other hand we must definitively state that the conclusion of peace is having a negative influence on the spiritual and ideological unleashing of international revolution. The influence of the Russian revolution on the international workers movement, due to its capitulation to international imperialism, is weakening (curtailment of revolutionary propaganda at the front, discontinuation of the policy of unmasking international imperialism, the possibility that internal policies in Russia will follow a "moderate" course). Attempts at diplomatic maneuvering on the part of the Soviet State also are incapable of inspiring the international proletariat, since they demonstrate not the strength, but the weakness of the revolution. The very fact that an annexationist peace was concluded strengthens the defensist trends in the backward strata of the international proletariat. In Germany the imperialists make reference to this peace as they intensify their promises to the workers that peace and bread will be attained through imperialist victories. They try to scare them with the example of the Russian defeat and "decay." In France and England they set their workers against the German proletariat, who "betrayed" the Russian revolution. In America defensist agitation is developing, which makes blatant use of the banner of protecting the Russian revolution from German annexations.

But at the same time the intensification of global fighting dashes the hopes for peace that seized the masses in the fall of 1917. The extremely clear demonstration of the annexationist policies of the ruling classes and their social agents during the conclusion of peace reveals the true colors of defensism and civil peace. It paves the way for the dissolution of the last prejudices that are currently restraining the outbreak of the working masses.

The most critical moment in the manifestation of the contradictions engendered by the whole imperialist system and imperialist war is impending. Throughout the coming spring and summer the downfall of the imperialist system must begin, which, if the German imperialists win the current phase of the war, may perhaps merely be postponed, but will then break out in still more violent forms.

6. The calculations of the German imperialists with regard to making peace with the Soviet Republic amounted to the following. On the one hand, due to the difficulty of managing the food economy in the north and the absence of powerful bourgeois agents who could support an occupying force (such as, for example, the Ukrainian Central Rada), it was expedient to defer the military seizure of north Russia, the direct overthrow of Soviet power and taking on the task of managing the economy of northern Russia. On the other hand, it

was important to gain control of and utilize the grain-growing and industrial south to meet the needs of the German capitalist economy. Third, by allowing the economy in the north to decompose as a natural result of being cut off from the south and taking advantage of control of the sources of the raw materials and food crops that feed the north, as well as by applying armed pressure from the strategic points that they seized in the north and their new partial annexations, German imperialism counted on economics to subjugate the north with the tentacles of German financial capital and to destroy the social gains won by the workers' revolution, thus uprooting Soviet power from within. Whether the onslaught of German imperialism on the Soviet Republic will be more or less severe, clandestine or blatant will depend on various circumstances, including the situation in the war theater, the internal state of affairs in the Central Powers, the decisiveness of resistance shown by the Soviet state and revolutionary classes of the Russian south and occupied northwest.

7. Aside from the onslaught of German imperialism, the Soviet Republic is threatened by an onslaught from the Allied coalition. German imperialism's plans for the near future call for subjugating the economy of northern Russia to the internal influence of German financial capital, using extortion and attempts to rob the Soviet state of its revolutionary substance, rather than trying to overthrow it directly. The Anglo-French and Japanese imperialists plan to work toward a situation that is half occupation, half restoration of the bourgeois-compromiser order in selected regions of the Far East, subjugating these regions to the control of Allied capital with help from Russian petty bourgeois agents (defensists and Kadets). The latest note of the "Allies" on the subject of cancellation of debts demonstrates, moreover, that Anglo-French capital also displays the inclination to attempt to subjugate the Soviet Republic to its internal control. Finally, America will attempt to subjugate the Soviet Republic to the influence of American capital by working through the Soviet state, rather than following Germany's path of playing on Soviet exhaustion. Here American capital is counting on securing the allegiance of a healthy peasant market cleansed of serfdom, on the creation of large scale industry organized into trusts in Russia, and on the contrast they will portray between industrial-peasant bourgeois democracy in Russia and the United States' rivals, Germany and Japan. Generally and as a whole, the position of the Soviet Republic is currently such that, as she is threatened by direct imperialist pressure from all sides, she cannot at present pursue a policy of general open attack, but can and must be ready to launch one at any moment, while temporarily conducting a policy of systematic resistance and active opposition to the importunities of imperialists of all countries and stripes.

8. The economic position and class structure in Russia have changed since the conclusion of peace. The situation that has been created provides a basis for two opposite tendencies—toward both a weakening and an increase in revolutionary forces. The first of these tendencies was directly strengthened by the conclusion of peace and may prevail at first.

The loss of a portion of the Petersburg region has completed the rapid decline of this area, which could be observed as early as the spring of 1917 and which was a consequence of the economic "artificiality" of Petersburg's industry during the period of the war and the closing of the sea lanes. Peace was supposed to save the Red capital, but it saved only its territory, while at the same time rendering it impotent as a revolutionary force. The disruption of industrial production, unemployment, the loss by the proletariat of their class identification, and [consequent] decrease in their class fighting capacity has grown more severe. Petersburg has lost its significance as a major economic and revolutionary center.

The conclusion of the annexationist peace also undermines (although less severely) the other progressive industrial region—that of Moscow, where the working class will also be weakened by interruption of shipments of metals, coal, foodstuffs and the consequent unemployment and loss of class identification.

The conclusion of the annexationist peace will also have a negative impact on the economic situation and political activity (fighting power) of the tired and hungry poorer

peasants of the northern and central industrial provinces. The disruption of urban industry, the interruption of shipments of food crops from the South, and the loss of the opportunity to go to southern Russia to earn money will lead to extreme poverty and loss of class consciousness; on the other hand, the proletarianization of the peasantry will, to some degree, excite revolutionary impulses and hatred for the German imperialists.

The poorer and "laboring" peasants of the agricultural provinces, who are busy with the division of the land and have not yet had any opportunity to organize a strong economy of their own during the period after the fall of the bourgeois order, which was also a period during which productive capacity decreased in all countries, will continue to support the Soviet state.

The Ural mining region, the western slope of the Urals, and Western Siberia, and their industrial centers are comparatively healthy economically, although they are pervaded with petty-bourgeois elements and have not escaped the effects of the general economic chaos. The workers and peasants revolution and the Soviet state will also receive support from the workers and poorer peasants of these regions.

The proletariat of the south, who bore the whole burden of defeating the bourgeois uprising in the south and who are now putting up the most decisive resistance to the German occupation, must, despite the devastation [of their economy] and their exhaustion, retain considerable fighting capacity as a class due to the combat and class education they received in the fire of civil war. Along with the poorer Ukrainian peasants, who live under the threat of the return of the landed gentry and renewed German-Haydamak robbery, this class will provide steadfast support for revolt against the occupying forces and their bourgeois Ukrainian stewards.

The poorer peasants of the non-black earth regions of the northwestern area of Russia, because of the even more devastating impact of German requisitions on their economy, will provide and are already providing manpower for the fight against the occupiers and reinstated land owners.

A positive aspect is the completion of the demobilization of the old army, returning millions of workers to productive labor, strengthening the rural economy, intensifying the revolutionary process in the country, as well as dispelling the festering atmosphere created by idle military forces. The beneficial effects of the actual cessation of the imperialist war (begun in October of 1917) and the associated demobilization of industry are only now beginning to be felt.

9. Given these circumstances, despite the temporary weakening of the forces of revolution and the difficult international position of the Soviet Republic, there is no serious support within the current Soviet state for restoration of either the monarchy or the rule of the compromiser parties.

The economy based on land owning by the gentry and the political power of the land-owning class has been destroyed: the bourgeoisie have been annihilated and there are no longer any rich peasantry (the new stratum of agricultural petty-bourgeoisie has not yet had a chance to develop, while the old stratum is being put out of commission under pressure of rural poverty). Support for the monarchy has been crippled. On the other hand, the urban lower middle class and the bourgeois intelligentsia have also been weakened. There is no basis for a resurgence of the power of the compromiser parties of Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, which in general are able only to be an intermediate step en route to dictatorship of the proletariat and rural poor but cannot be an intermediate step in the resurrection of the bourgeois order. There is also no basis for a lasting recovery of the capitalist and land-owning economy in the regions seized by the Germans.

On the contrary, the basis exists for the strengthening and further development of the dictatorship of the proletariat and poorer peasants and the socialist transformation of society that they began. Aside from the factors strengthening this positive tendency in the development of the revolution cited above, the following circumstances are also of significance.



First and foremost, the initial break-up of the bourgeois-compromiser system of government, and of the old relationships between production and the material resources of the bourgeoisie and its allies, is almost complete. Further, the class education of the proletariat during the civil war has given them a great store of class solidarity, energy and consciousness. The real gains they have made additionally strengthen these revolutionary forces and [give them] energy in their resistance to the enemy that threatens what they have achieved. Vigorous efforts to organize production in accordance with socialist principles should, on the one hand, strengthen the economic base of the proletariat as a revolutionary force and, on the other hand, serve as a new school of class organization and activism. Finally, retention of ties to the international and all-Russian proletarian movements will also increase the class activism of the proletariat and protect it from disintegration and exhaustion.

However, due to the immediate, direct consequences of the peace—decrease in class activism and diminished class identification among the proletariat in the major revolutionary centers—and due to the increasing rapprochement between the proletariat and poorest of the peasants (who, after the peace treaty was signed under pressure of their demands and influences, must become the bulwark of the Soviet power), it is very possible that the majority of the Communist Party and the Soviet state controlled by it will tend toward what amounts to merely a new type of petty-bourgeois politics.

If such a tendency does arise, the working class will cease to be the leader, the predominant force of the socialist revolution, which leads the poorer peasants in the annihilation of the rule of financial capital and the landed gentry. It will become a force dispersed throughout a semi-proletarian petty bourgeois mass, ceasing to have as its goal a proletarian struggle in alliance with the proletariat of Western Europe to overthrow the imperialist system. Its aim instead will be the defense of a farm-based fatherland from the burdens of imperialism, an aim which can be achieved through compromise with the imperialists. If it refuses to carry on an activist proletarian policy, the gains of the workers and peasants revolution will begin to ossify into a system of state capitalism and petty-bourgeois economic relationships. The "defense of the socialist fatherland" will in actuality turn into defense of a petty-bourgeois homeland, subservient to the influence of international capital.

10. Two paths are now open to the party of the proletariat. One path is to defend and consolidate the remaining territories of the Soviet state, which from an economic standpoint and in view of the incompleteness of the revolutionary process is merely a transitory stage toward socialism (given the incomplete nationalization of banks, the capitalist forms of financing industry, the partial nationalization of enterprises, the dominance of small-scale agriculture in the village, and the tendency of peasants to solve the agrarian problem by dividing the land), and which from a political point of view would be transformed from a dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the poorer peasantry into a tool for the political ascendancy of the semi-proletarian-petty-bourgeois masses, ending as a transition stage to the complete domination of finance capital.

This course can be justified—in words only—by the desire at all costs to preserve for the international revolution a revolutionary force and the Soviet state, even if only within "Great Russia" [the ethnically Great Russian heartland centered on Moscow—ed.]. In that case, all energies will have to be directed toward consolidating and developing the forces of production and toward an "organic reconstruction," leading to a refusal to continue the destruction of capitalistic relationships in production and will be accompanied by a partial restoration of the latter.

11. The economic and political program which probably can be anticipated if the above course, which in part has already been recommended by certain representatives of the right wing of the party, is carried through, is as follows.

In foreign policy the aggressive tactics for the unmasking of imperialism would be replaced by the diplomatic maneuvering of the Russian Government among the imperialist powers. The Soviet Republic not only would make trade agreements with them, but also

would form more organic economic and political connections and would solicit military and political support (by inviting military instructors, by contracting loans, by agreements for joint political action, etc.).

The economic policy of such a course would aim to form agreements with capitalist businessmen, both "native" and the foreigners who stand behind them, as well as with the "strong" groups in the village ("co-operators"). The denationalization of banks, even though in a concealed form, would logically be involved in such agreements. Such denationalization could be effected through the formation of special (semi-private and semi-state) banks for separate branches of industry (the by-laws for the flour-mill banks have already been approved), by giving to the so-called "co-operative" banks extra-territorial rights, by refusing to adopt the system of centralized public accounting, and by the strengthening of capitalist credit in government and semi-government forms.

Instead of leading from partial nationalization to complete socialization of large-scale industry, agreements with "captains of industry" would lead to the formation of large trusts controlled by the latter and embracing all basic branches of industry, which from the outside might have the appearance of government undertakings. Such a system of organizing production would provide a social basis for evolution toward state capitalism and would be but a transition to it.

The policy of organizing the management of enterprises on the principles of broad participation by capitalists and semi-bureaucratic centralization ties in naturally with a labor policy directed toward the introduction among workers of discipline under the guise of "self-discipline," the introduction of labor duty for workers (such a project had already been proposed by the right wing Bolsheviks), a piecework system of wages, longer hours of labor, etc.

Government would tend to develop toward bureaucratic centralization, the domination of individual commissars, depriving local soviets of their independence and in fact abandonment of the type of "commune-state" governed from below. Numerous facts indicate that there is already a definite tendency in this direction (the decree relating to the management of railroads, the articles of Latsis, etc.).

In the realm of military policy a tendency toward the re-establishment of military duty on an all-national scale (including the bourgeoisie) would assert itself; this tendency is already manifesting itself (appeals of Trotsky and Podvoisky). By creating army cadres, for whose training and direction officers will be needed, we will lose sight of the goal of creating a proletarian officers corps through setting up an extensive system of officer training schools and curricula in accordance with a rational plan, and will essentially restore the old officers corps and return the power of command to the tsar's generals.

If this were to occur, under the guise of agitation for "defense of the socialist fatherland," we will be inundated with propaganda in favor of a petty-bourgeois homeland and a nationalist war against German imperialism.

12. The path described above, when considered as whole, as well as the spirit prompting its adoption, appears extremely dangerous to the cause of the Russian and the international proletariat. It would strengthen the process started by the Brest peace to separate the "Great Russian" Soviet Republic from the All-Russian and international revolutionary movement, confining it to the limits of a national state with a transitional economic and petty-bourgeois political order.

In foreign affairs, given the obvious weakness of Soviet diplomacy and Soviet influence in the arena of the international imperialist struggle, it would subordinate the Soviet Republic to imperialist connections, severing its ties with the revolutionary proletariat of all countries. It would weaken even further the international revolutionary significance of Soviet power and the Russian Revolution.

Within the country it would strengthen the economic and political influence of the Russian and international bourgeoisie, and thus strengthen both the forces of counter-revolution and

those intelligentsia groups which have sabotaged Soviet power. In view of the world-wide decline of productive forces, concessions to the bourgeoisie cannot produce a rapid improvement in the national economy along capitalist lines. At the same time these concessions would preclude the possibility of a more economical and better planned utilization of the remaining means of production, which would be feasible only under a system of thoroughgoing socialization.

The introduction of labor discipline in connection with the restoration of capitalist leadership in production could not substantially increase the output of labor, but it would diminish the class initiative, the activity and the organization of the proletariat. It threatens the enslavement of the working class and will excite discontent among the backward elements as well as among the avant-garde of the proletariat. To put that system into effect in the light of the proletariat's strong class hatred of the "capitalist-saboteurs," the Communist Party would have to rely on the small bourgeoisie against the workers and would destroy itself as the party of the proletariat.

If the Soviet Republic is bureaucratically centralized and deals are made in government offices with bourgeois and petty bourgeois businessmen, this can only lead to a decrease in the class activism and consciousness of the proletariat and a cooling of the workers toward the party.

Attempts to re-establish universal military service, in so far as they are not doomed to failure, would lead in fact to the arming of the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois counter-revolutionists. This is especially clear with regard to the re-establishment of the old officer corps and the return of command power to the tsar's generals, as long as giving them this power is not accompanied by the most vigorous efforts to create proletarian cadres of revolutionary officers and to monitor the tsarist commanding officers vigilantly during the transitional period. A "universal Russian" (as opposed to a class) army headed by the former generals cannot be permeated with a revolutionary class spirit and will inexorably lead to loss of class identification by the soldiers and thus will not provide support for armed intervention in the international revolution by the Russian proletariat.

The line of policy described above is bound to strengthen the influence in Russia of foreign and domestic counter-revolutionary forces, to shatter the revolutionary might of the working class and, by separating the Russian Revolution from the international [revolution], disastrously affect the interests of both.

13. The proletarian communists consider it necessary to pursue a different line of policy. They repudiate the policy which urges the safe-guarding of the Soviet oasis in the north of Russia by making concessions which tend to transform it into a petty-bourgeois state. They reject the call to "organic internal work," which is based on the assumption that "the critical period" of civil war has come to an end.

The critical period of civil war is over only in the sense that the objective necessity for applying everywhere extreme physical methods of revolutionary violence no longer exists. Once the bourgeoisie is beaten and is incapable of open combat, "military" methods become mostly unnecessary. But the sharpness of class hostility between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie cannot diminish; as before, the position of the proletariat in relation to the bourgeois comes down to absolute negation, to its extermination as a class. The end of the critical period of civil war must not mean the opportunity for a bargain with the remnants of the bourgeoisie, but rather that the "organic construction" of socialism, which is undoubtedly the most urgent question of the moment, can be carried forward only by the energies of the proletariat aided by qualified technicians and administrators, and not by some sort of co-operation with the "propertied elements."

The Russian workers' revolution cannot "save itself" by departing from the road of the international revolution or by continually avoiding battle, by retreating before the onslaught of international capital and by making concessions to "native capital."

From this point of view the following are necessary: a foreign policy which is firmly based on class principles, which unites international revolutionary propaganda both in word and

in deed, and which aims to strengthen the organic connection with international socialism (and not with the international bourgeoisie); a determined resistance to every interference of imperialists in the internal affairs of the Soviet Republic; a refusal to form political and military agreements which would make the Soviet Republic a tool of imperialist camps.

In international economic policy only trade bargains, loans, and securing a supply of technical aid should be allowed, care being taken that Russian capital is not subordinated to the control of foreign finance capital.

It is necessary to complete the nationalization of banks, both extensively (socialization of the so-called "co-operative" banks) and intensively (organization of socialized public accounting and abolition of capitalist forms of financing). The nationalization of banks must be linked with the socialization of industrial production and the complete removal of the remnants of capitalist and feudal relationships in production which hinder its organization on a large and well-planned scale. The management of [industrial] enterprises should be handed over to mixed collegiums of workers and technical personnel, which are under the supervision and leadership of local councils of people's economy. All economic life should be subordinated to the organizing influence of these councils, which are to be elected by workers without any participation of the "propertied elements," but with the participation of the unions of the technical personnel and other employees of the enterprises.

There must be no capitulation before the bourgeoisie and its petty-bourgeois intellectual flunkies, but rather the complete destruction of the bourgeoisie and the final defeat of sabotage. The counter-revolutionary press and counter-revolutionary bourgeois organizations must be completely liquidated. Labor duty for qualified specialists and the intelligentsia must be introduced. Consumers' communes must be curtailed and their property confiscated. A war of poor peasants against the rich must be organized in the village, large-scale communal farming must be developed, and support must be given to ways of working the land by the poorer peasants that can serve as transitions to socialist agriculture.

We should select several support points, several local healthy centers of production (for example, the Urals and Western Siberia, etc.) and dispatch technical equipment and financial resources there on a large scale (in order to rapidly increase their productivity), rather than to areas of famine, as has been done up to now.

Rather than introducing piecework wages and the lengthening of working hours, which are absurd measures in a situation where unemployment increases steadily, it is necessary that local councils of national economy and trade unions introduce production norms and the shortening of the working day, along with an increase in the number of shifts and collective organization of productive work on a wide scale.

Extensive independence should be granted to local soviets and their activities should not be restricted by commissars sent by the central authorities. The Soviet state and the party of the proletariat must seek support through the autonomous class actions of the broader masses, and must concentrate all its efforts on developing such actions.

In organizing the armed forces, workers of the evacuated areas who do not have other productive work should be utilized to create the cadre of instructors and leaders for the units that are rapidly being mobilized. It will also be essential to: use former officers of the tsar's army to teach these instructors; create a proletarian-revolutionary rather than a bourgeois-intelligentsia reserve officer corps; teach military science only to workers and the poorer peasants; monitor the former tsarist generals closely; and train as higher commanding officers party members who have already had combat experience but still lack theoretical training.

14. In their practical attitude to the civil war, the proletarian Communists are against breaching the peace by organizing partisan attack on those portions of the front where peace is actually being maintained. This tactic would mean a disorganized attack by a minority of the workers without mass support. But they have expressed their full support for uprising in the rear of the annexed areas, for intense fighting in areas where military engagements

continue, and for the formation of party organizations of partisan detachments to send to the battle lines.

15. The proletarian communists define their relation to the party majority as that of the left wing of the party and of the advance guard of the Russian proletariat, while at the same time preserving complete unity with the rest of the party, provided that the policies of the majority do not create an irreparable breach within the ranks of the proletariat. They define their relationship to Soviet power as a position of all possible support for it in case of need, even by means of participation in it, given that ratification of the peace has removed from the agenda the question of responsibility for that decision and has created a new objective situation. This participation is possible only on the basis of a definite political program which would prevent the deviation of Soviet power and the majority of the party onto the destructive path of petty-bourgeois policies. In case of such a deviation the left wing of the party will be forced to take up the position of an efficient and responsible proletarian opposition.

*Kommunist*, No. 1, April 4, 1918, pp. 4-9.



## SOVIET RESPONSE TO THE JAPANESE LANDING AT VLADIVOSTOK

April 5, 1918

*Allied intervention in Russia, either in cooperation with the Bolsheviks against Germany or in support of anti-Bolshevik groups which were also anti-German, was a constant topic of discussion among the Allied governments in the winter of 1917-18. The French were especially insistent, and the United States most opposed. Interest in having the Japanese intervene in Siberia grew steadily, to which the Japanese were not adverse. The Soviet government, which had not made particular objection to a small British landing at Murmansk on March 5 because of its limited nature and value as potential block to German and Finnish advances in the area, took a more hostile view toward intervention in the Far East. Therefore when the Japanese, following the killing of two Japanese in Vladivostok on April 4, landed troops and occupied the city the next day, the Soviets objected vigorously. This took the form of the following statement by the Council of People's Commissars, published in Izvestiia the next day, followed by several diplomatic notes of protest, and a rapid deterioration in relations between the Soviet government and the Allies began.*

## JAPAN BEGINS HER CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE SOVIET REPUBLIC BY LANDING TROOPS IN VLADIVOSTOK

### ENGLAND EVIDENTLY FOLLOWS IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JAPAN

A statement has been received from Siberia from the Soviet authorities in Vladivostok and Irkutsk to the effect that Admiral Kato, the commander of the Japanese fleet, has landed troops in Vladivostok and issued an appeal to the local population, informing them of the fact that Japan takes upon itself the preservation of order. As a pretext for the landing, the murder of two Japanese by unknown people, which took place in Vladivostok, is used.

Regarding this murder, its causes, circumstances, and the culprits, the Soviet Government at the present moment has no information whatsoever. But it knows, as does the whole world, that the Japanese Imperialists for several months were preparing a landing in Vladivostok. The official Japanese press wrote that Japan was called upon to re-establish order in Siberia up to Irkutsk, and even up to the Urals. The Japanese authorities were looking for an appropriate pretext for their robbers' raid into Russian territory. In the General Staff of Tokio

monstrous statements were being invented about conditions in Siberia, about German war prisoners, etc., etc. The Japanese Ambassador in Rome stated a few weeks ago that the German war prisoners were armed and ready to seize the Siberian railroad. This statement has made the round of the world's press. The military authorities of the Soviet Republic sent a British and an American officer along the Siberian line, and gave them a complete opportunity to convince themselves of the falsity of the official Japanese statement. With this excuse removed, the Japanese Imperialists have to look for other excuses. The murder of two Japanese, from this point of view, was very opportune. On the 4th of April the murder took place, and on the 5th the Japanese Admiral, without awaiting any investigation, has accomplished his landing.

The course of events leaves no doubt whatsoever that all this was pre-arranged and that the provocative murder of two Japanese was a necessary part of this preparation. In this way the Imperialistic blow from the East, which has been contemplated for a long time, has fallen. The Imperialists of Japan wish to strangle the Soviet revolution, wish to cut off Russia from the Pacific Ocean, wish to seize the rich territories of Siberia and to enslave Siberian workers and peasants. Bourgeois Japan acts as the deadly enemy of the Soviet Republic. What is the plan of action of the other Governments of the Entente: America, England, France, and Italy? Up to the present moment their policy in regard to the predatory intentions of Japan was evidently undecided. The American Government, it seems, was against the Japanese invasion. But at present the situation cannot remain indefinite any longer. England intends to go hand in hand with Japan in working Russia's ruin.

This question must be put to the British Government categorically. The same question must be put to the diplomatic representatives of the United States and the other countries of the Entente. The answer given, and even more, the action taken by the Allied countries will have inevitably a great influence on the future international policy of the Soviet Government.

While undertaking the proper diplomatic steps, the Soviet Government at the same time issues an order to the Soviets in Siberia to offer resistance to any forcible invasion of Russian territory.

#### WORKERS AND PEASANTS! HONEST CITIZENS!

A new horrible trial is coming from the East. Within the country the dark forces are raising their heads. The bourgeoisie of Siberia is stretching out its hand to foreign invaders. The City Duma of Vladivostok, which consists of Mensheviks and Right Social Revolutionists passed a resolution welcoming the armed invasion by Japan. In its desire to strangle the Russian revolution, to take away from the workers and peasants political power, the land, the control of industry—the Russian bourgeoisie and its lackeys—Mensheviks and S-R—are acting in concert with the Japanese plunderers. Resistance to Japanese invasion and merciless struggle with Japan's agents and assistants within the country is a matter of life and death for the Soviet Republic, for the laboring masses of all Russia.

Cumming and Pettit, pp. 194-195.



#### THE ROLE OF MILITARY COMMISSARS

April 6, 1918

*Perhaps the greatest innovation of the new Red Army was the institution of military commissars. Their role vis-a-vis the commanders, especially the "military specialists" from the old army,*

*was one of the thorniest problems of the new army during the Civil War, and remained an issue long afterwards. This is the earliest, and perhaps fullest during the Civil War, exposition of their role.*

#### ON MILITARY COMMISSARS AND MEMBERS OF MILITARY COUNCILS

The military commissar is the direct political agent of Soviet power within the army. His post is of the highest importance. Commissars are appointed from the ranks of exemplary revolutionaries, capable of remaining the embodiments of revolutionary duty at the most critical moments and under the most difficult circumstances.

The person of a commissar is inviolable. Interference with a commissar in the performance of his duties and, all the more, assault on a commissar, is deemed an extremely serious crime against the Soviet state. The military commissar ensures that the army does not become isolated from the Soviet system as a whole and that individual military institutions do not become breeding grounds for conspiracy or weapons that are turned against the workers and peasants. The commissar participates in all the activities of the military commanders and along with them receives reports and dispatches and countersigns orders. The orders of Military Councils are valid only if they are signed not only by the military members (commanders) of the Councils, but by at least one commissar.

All work must be carried out in the presence of the commissar, but the primary command responsibility for specialized military decisions belongs not to the commissar, but to the military specialist who works closely with him.

The commissar is not responsible for the success of purely military operational or battle orders. This is totally the responsibility of the military commander. The commissar's signature on an operational order indicates that he vouches for the fact that it was dictated by operational and not some other (counterrevolutionary) considerations. If he is dissatisfied with a purely military instruction, the commissar does not countermand it, but merely reports his dissatisfaction to the superior Military Council. A commissar can countermand an operational order only if he has grounds for believing that it was dictated by counterrevolutionary motives.

If an order has been signed by a commissar it has the force of law and must be obeyed at any cost. It is the duty of the commissar to ensure that the order is obeyed to the letter and, in performing this duty, he has all the authority and all the resources of the Soviet State at his disposal. The military commissar who connives at noncompliance with orders is subject to immediate dismissal and prosecution.

The commissars provide a link between the institutions of the Red Army and central and local institutions of the Soviet state and facilitate the latter's support of the Red Army.

The commissars ensure that all workers in the Red Army, from top to bottom, perform their work conscientiously and energetically, that monetary resources are expended economically and under the strictest monitoring, and that the military property of the Soviet Republic is scrupulously maintained.

The commissars on the Supreme Military Council are appointed by the Council of People's Commissars.

Commissars of the *okrug* [area] or *raion* [regional] Soviets are appointed through agreement between the Highest Military Councils and the leadership of the Council of Deputies of the given *okrug* or *raion*.

An All-Russian Bureau of Military Commissars has been established under the auspices of the Supreme Military Council.

This Bureau coordinates the activity of the Commissars, responds to their requests, develops instructions for them, and, if necessary, convenes congresses of the commissars.

Signed by the People's Commissar of Military Affairs,  
Chairman of the Supreme Military Council, L. Trotsky.

## MALEVICH, "ARCHITECTURE AS A SLAP IN THE FACE TO FERRO-CONCRETE"

April 6, 1918

*In the debate over the value of the old art and architecture, few so vigorously advocated rejecting the past as Kazimir Severinovich Malevich, himself one of the great avant-garde artists. Like many of the avant-garde he was concerned with art in the broadest sense, as shown in this attack on traditional architecture. His is more than iconoclasm, however; it is an affirmation of faith in a glorious future of unending progress, especially through technology. New technology and machinery were favorite themes of many of the avant-garde artists. The title is a play on the famous avant-garde manifesto of 1912, "A Slap in the Face of Public Taste."*

K.S. Malevich

*Architecture as a Slap in the Face to Ferro-Concrete*

Art has moved its avant-garde from the tunnels of the past.

The body of art is constantly being reincarnated and strengthens the basis of the skeleton in solid, strong links, in accordance with the time.

The volcanoes of the new embryos of creative forms sweep all away, pulverize the shell and erect a new one.

Each age runs faster than its predecessor and takes on itself a greater burden, forging for itself roads from ferro-concrete bodies.

Our age is running in four directions at once, like a heart, expanding, it pushes forward the walls of space, going deeper in all directions.

The primordial age strove forward along one line, then two and three, and now four—into space, breaking loose from the earth.

Futurism has drawn the new landscapes of today's swiftly changing things; it expressed on canvas the whole dynamism of the ferro-concrete life.

Thus the art of painting moved forward in the wake of the contemporary technology of machines.

Literature left the clerk's work with the word, approached the letter and vanished in its being.

Music has passed from the boudoir melodies of tender lilac to pure sound as such. All art has freed its face from foreign elements: only the art of architecture still has the pimples of contemporaneity on its face—warts of the past grow endlessly on it.

Even the best constructions will without fail be resting on Greek columns like a cripple's crutches.

The building will without fail be crowned with a little wreath of acanthus leaves.

A skyscraper with lifts, electric lights, telephones etc. will be adorned with Venuses, cupids and various other attributes of Greek times.

On the other hand, the now dead Russian style gives no peace either.

It is constantly on the point of coming to the surface again; some eccentrics are even thinking of resurrecting it and with their originality spreading the fields of our swift age with manure.

Now Lazarus, resurrected, walks on the concrete and asphalt, hurts his head on the conductor wires, wonders at the motor cars—and asks to go back to his grave.

The trams, cars and aeroplanes also look in astonishment at the helpless creature and give him three copecks from pity.

The ridiculous and insignificant Lazarus in his robe amidst the furious speed of our electric machines.

His shoulders are pitiful and the time which has been unloaded onto him will smash him to smithereens. My dear eccentrics, remove as quickly as possible the dead old men from the road down which the young spirit is rushing.



Do not hinder its swift path. Do not prevent the young body from flexing its muscles. Get it into your heads that however many corpses you resurrect, a corpse will always be a corpse.

And only the eccentric architect's sick, naive imagination supposes that a corpse with a bit of concrete slapped on and shod with iron can support its rotten skeleton.

A complete lack of talent and poverty of creative powers makes them wander about the cemeteries and dig up rotting remains.

This sort of construction, by which Moscow has enriched herself—for example, the Kazan railway station or the Treasury building on Afanasy Lane—graphically demonstrate their builders' lack of talent.

Our time is one of immense power; trembling in its nervous élan, it has not a moment of repose in its headlong, lightning-like rush—every second that engenders a little screw arouses indignation. Our age is speed.

And it is just this speed that they are trying to dress up in the clothes of a mammoth, or they are adapting the Kiev cave catacombs for a fast game of football.

A ridiculous undertaking. Our twentieth century cannot be enclosed in the caftan of Aleksey Mikhailovich or have Vladimir Monomakh's fur hat put on its head; nor can it be supported by the Greeks' exquisitely clumsy columns. All this will fly into dust beneath the pressure of our temperament.

I live in the immense city of Moscow and await its reincarnation; I always rejoice when some private residence from the time of Tsar Aleksey is done away with.

I eagerly await that the new house which is born will have a contemporary mother and father, and be alive and powerful.

But in reality everything turns out differently: it is not complicated, but original: the dead man is taken away and buried, but his neighbour who died in the time of Rogneda is dug up and put in his place, having previously been made up on the ferro-concrete recipe, with I-beams put in the places that are rotten.

When, in its own good time, the venerable Kazan station died (and it died because its skeleton could not cope with the race of contemporary life) I thought that in its place they would build a well-proportioned, powerful body capable of taking the pressure of contemporary life's sharp impact.

But the eccentric turned up here too. Availing himself of the railways he set out for archaeology's undertakers' parlour, and made trips to Novgorod and Yaroslavl according to a list in the book of dead.

He dug up the corpse, dragged it along and duly installed it, to delight Moscow.

He wanted to be a nationalist but turned out nothing but a mediocrity.

Can the directors of the Kazan railway imagine our age of ferro-concrete? Have they ever seen the beauties with iron muscles—the two-six-four engines? Have they ever heard their living roar? The peace of their even sigh? Their groan in motion? Have they seen the living lights of the signals? Can they see the swift movement of the travellers?

Obviously not. They saw before them the graveyard of national art and they imagined the whole route and network as belonging to the graveyard: this is what happened to the construction, that should have been contemporary.

Did the builder ever ask himself what a station was? Obviously not. Did he understand that a station is a door, a tunnel, the nervous pulse of trembling, a town's breathing, a living vein, a quivering heart?

The place to which panting iron two-six-four expresses, like meteors, rush; into the larynx of the ferro-concrete throat, bringing with them a crowd of people who like vibrios dash about in the organism of the station and the carriages.

The whistling, clattering, groaning of the engines, the heavy, proud breathing; the steam ejects the sighs of the engine, like a volcano, amidst the resilient rafters of the roof, cutting through its lightness, the rails of the semaphore, bells, signals and loads of suitcases,

porters—all this is linked with movement, hastening time and the infuriating hands of the clock, fretting at the sluggish departure of the engines and trains, distributing the movements of their bodies.

The station is life's volcano: there is no room for rest.

And this bubbling source of rapids is being covered by old monastery roofs.

Iron, concrete, cement and electricity are insulted, like a girl at an old man's love.

The engines blush in shame seeing an alms-house before them.

And what are the concrete walls waiting for? They are waiting to be painted by icon-lamp painters, fed on rouged cakes and the aestheticism of painting's old sweet shops.

The avant-garde of revolutionary destruction is marching over the whole wide world, life is being cleaned of its old mould, and on the square of the fields of revolution there should be erected corresponding buildings.

We are the highest point in the race of contemporary life, the kingdom of machines and motors and their work on earth and in space.

We tear ourselves from earthbound shackles, our motors daily enter the chasms of space; we represent striving, and everything on earth should be built in the form of strivings. Down with cupolas and heavenly vaults which with a little lid block the way for gusts of steam; let wedges cut into the bosom of space.

Henceforth may every creation create the form of what is passing.

Let tall steeples and flying houses prepare for flight.

The doctors and surgeons should remove the fragments of Greek ruins from our body.

Our new architect will be he who, throwing aside Greece and Rome, speaks in the new language of architecture.

Ruined towns await your miracles, your new ideas. But for God's sake do not turn up with the covers of old bibles and testaments.

But we painters must rise to the defence of new buildings, and, for the time being, lock up or even blow up the institute of old architects; we must burn the remains of the Greeks in the crematorium, to impel people towards what is new, in order that the newly forged image of our day be pure.

*Malevich*, pp. 60-64.



## SOVIET FEDERALISM—AN INTERVIEW WITH STALIN

April 9, 1918

*Pre-revolutionary Bolshevik theory rejected the idea of a federal state. Confronted after the October Revolution with the need to counter strong independence and autonomy movements among the nationality groups of the old Russian empire, and with the necessity to find a way to prevent their slogan of national self-determination (see above, January 15) from resulting in a truncated Russian state, they turned to the idea of a federal republic. As early as January, 1918, Lenin had endorsed the idea, in connection with the Ukrainian problem, and the Third Congress of Soviets in January accepted his principle of Soviet Russia as a federation of nationality based soviet republics. This federal principle, to be incorporated into the 1918 and later constitutions, was given a general exposition by Stalin, including an explanation of the unique character of the Soviet federal principle. His statement took the form of an interview in Pravda.*

In connection with the discussion that has developed in the past few days in the Soviet press on the principles and methods of constituting a Russian Federation, our correspondent requested the opinion of Comrade Stalin, People's Commissar for the Affairs of Nationalities.

The following is Comrade Stalin's reply to a series of questions put by our correspondent.

#### BOURGEOIS-DEMOCRATIC FEDERATIONS

Of all the existing federal unions, the most characteristic of the bourgeois-democratic system are the American and Swiss federations. Historically, they evolved from independent states, through confederations, into federations, but in fact they became unitary states, federalism being preserved only in form. This whole process of development—from independence to unitarism—proceeded to the accompaniment of violence, oppression and national wars. Suffice it to recall the war between the Southern and Northern states of America and the war between the Sonderbund and the other cantons in Switzerland. Nor can one refrain from observing that the Swiss cantons and the American states were built not on national, nor even on economic lines, but quite by chance—by virtue of the chance seizure of this or that territory by colonial immigrants or village communities.

#### HOW THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION NOW IN PROCESS OF FORMATION DIFFERS FROM THEM

The federation now being built in Russia presents, and should present, an entirely different picture.

Firstly, the regions which have separated out in Russia represent quite definite units as regards manner of life and national composition. The Ukraine, the Crimea, Poland, Transcaucasia, Turkestan, the Middle Volga, and the Kirghiz territory are distinct from the centre not only because of their geographical location (border regions!), but also because they are integral economic territories having a population with a specific manner of life and national composition.

Secondly, these regions are not free and independent territories, but units which were forcibly squeezed into the all-Russian political organism, and which are now striving to secure the necessary freedom of action in the shape either of federal relations or complete independence. The history of the "union" of these territories is one long tale of violence and oppression on the part of the former Russian governments. The establishment of a federal system in Russia will mean the emancipation of these territories and the peoples inhabiting them from the old imperialist yoke. From unitarism to federalism!

Thirdly, in the Western federations the shaping of the state is in the hands of the imperialist bourgeoisie. Small wonder, then, that "union" there could not be effected without violence. Here, in Russia, on the contrary, the shaping of the political structure is in the hands of the proletariat, the sworn enemy of imperialism. In Russia, therefore, the federal system can, and must, be built on the basis of a free union of peoples.

That is the essential difference between the federation in Russia and the federations of the West.

#### STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

It is clear from this, Comrade Stalin continued, that the Russian Federation is not a union of independent cities (as caricaturists in the bourgeois press think), or of regions generally (as some of our comrades believe), but a union of definite historically evolved territories, each distinguished by a specific manner of life and national composition. The point is not the geographical location of certain regions, or even that certain areas are separated from the centre by stretches of water (Turkestan), or mountain ranges (Siberia), or steppes (Turkestan again). This geographical federalism, such as is preached by Latsis, has nothing in common with the federalism proclaimed by the Third Congress of Soviets. Poland and the Ukraine are not separated from the centre by mountain ranges or stretches of water.

Nevertheless it would not enter anyone's head to assert that the absence of these geographical attributes precludes the right of these regions to free self-determination.

On the other hand, Comrade Stalin said, it is unquestionable that the peculiar form of federalism advocated by the Moscow regionalists, who would artificially unite fourteen gubernias around Moscow, has likewise nothing in common with the resolution on federation of the Third Congress of Soviets. Undoubtedly, the central textile area, which embraces only a few gubernias, does in a way represent an integral economic unit, and as such it will undoubtedly be administered by a regional authority of its own, as an autonomous part of the Supreme Council of National Economy. But what can there be in common between backwoods Kaluga and industrial Ivanovo-Voznesensk, and on what principle they are "united" by the present regional Council of People's Commissars is beyond comprehension.

#### COMPOSITION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERAL REPUBLIC

Obviously, not every area or unit, and not every geographical territory can or should become a member of the federation, but only definite regions which naturally combine a specific manner of life, a specific national composition, and a certain minimum integrality of economic territory. Such are Poland, the Ukraine, Finland, the Crimea, Transcaucasia (incidentally, the possibility is not excluded that Transcaucasia may break up into a number of definite national-territorial units, e.g., Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan-Tatar, etc.), Turk-estan, the Kirghiz territory, the Tatar-Bashkir territory, Siberia and so on.

#### RIGHTS OF FEDERATING REGIONS. RIGHTS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

The rights of these federating regions will be definitely delimited in the process of constituting the Soviet Federation as a whole, but the general outline of these rights can be indicated already. Military and naval affairs, foreign affairs, railways, post and telegraph, currency, trade agreements and general economic, financial and banking policy will probably all come within the province of the central Council of People's Commissars. All other affairs, and primarily the methods of implementation of general decrees, education, judicature, administration, etc., will come within the province of the regional Councils of People's Commissars. No compulsory "state" language—either in the judicature or in the educational system! Each region will select the language or languages which correspond to the composition of its population, and there will be complete equality of languages both of the minorities and the majorities in all social and political institutions.

#### STRUCTURE OF THE CENTRAL AUTHORITY

The structure of the central authority, its manner of constitution, is determined by the specific features of the Russian Federation. In America and Switzerland, federalism resulted in practice in a two-chamber system: on the one hand, a parliament elected on the basis of general elections, and, on the other, a federal council constituted by the states or cantons. That is the two-chamber system which in practice leads to the usual bourgeois legislative red tape. Needless to say, the labouring masses of Russia would not reconcile themselves to such a two-chamber system. And this apart from the fact that such a system is wholly incompatible with the elementary demands of socialism.

We think, Comrade Stalin continued, that the supreme organ of power of the Russian Federation should be the Congress of Soviets elected by all the labouring masses of Russia, or the Central Executive Committee, acting as its deputy. Moreover, we shall have to discard the bourgeois prejudice regarding the infallibility of the "principle" of universal suffrage. The suffrage will probably be granted only to those sections of the population which are exploited, or which at least do not exploit the labour of others. That is a natural corollary of the *fact* of the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasants.

#### THE EXECUTIVE ORGAN OF POWER

As to the organ of executive power of the Russian Federation, i.e., the central Council of People's Commissars, it will be elected at the Congresses of Soviets, presumably from

candidates nominated by the centre and the federating regions. Thus between the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars there will not be, and should not be, any so-called second chamber. Without a doubt, practice may, and probably will, evolve other and more expedient and flexible forms of combining the interests of the regions and the centre in the structure of authority. But one thing is certain: namely, that whatever forms may be evolved in practice, they will not resurrect the obsolete two-chamber system which has been buried by our revolution.

#### TRANSITIONAL FUNCTION OF FEDERALISM

These, in my opinion, Comrade Stalin continued, are the general contours of the Russian Federation whose process of constitution we are now witnessing. Many are inclined to regard the federal system as the most stable, and even as ideal, and American, Canada and Switzerland are often cited as examples. But this infatuation with federalism is not warranted by history. In the first place, America and Switzerland are no longer federations: they were federations in the 1860's, but they have in fact become unitary states since the end of the last century, when all authority was transferred from the states or cantons to the central federal government.

History has shown that federalism in America and Switzerland was only a transitional step from the independence of the states or cantons to their complete union. Federalism proved quite expedient as a transitional step from independence to imperialist unitarism, but it became out of date and was discarded as soon as the conditions matured for the union of the states or cantons into a single integral state.

#### SHAPING THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.

##### FEDERALISM IN RUSSIA—A TRANSITIONAL STEP TO SOCIALIST UNITARISM

In Russia, constitutional development is proceeding in a reverse way. Compulsory tsarist unitarism is being replaced by voluntary federalism, in order that, in the course of time, federalism may be replaced by an equally voluntary and fraternal union of the labouring masses of all the nations and races of Russia. As in American and Switzerland, Comrade Stalin concluded, federalism in Russia is destined to serve as a means of transition—transition to the *socialist* unitarism of the future.

Stalin, *Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 69-75.



#### THE REMOVAL OF OLD MONUMENTS AND ERECTION OF NEW MONUMENTS TO THE REVOLUTION

April 12, 1918

*According to Lunacharsky, Lenin proposed to him the idea of creating new monuments to the revolution and its precursors. Both the monuments, and their unveiling, were to be acts of propaganda and education. The most immediate effect was to accelerate removal of old sculptures of tsars and generals before the May Day, 1918, celebrations. However, monumental sculptures of revolutionary heroes soon began to appear, a tradition which continued to dominate Soviet sculpture. Despite the activity of avant-garde artists in these years, including on official art commissions, these sculptures were almost all in a traditional representational-heroic style.*

DECREE ON THE REMOVAL OF MONUMENTS ERECTED IN HONOUR OF THE TSARS  
AND THEIR OFFICIALS AND THE SETTING UP OF DESIGNS FOR MONUMENTS  
OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST REVOLUTION.

In memory of the great revolution which has transformed Russia, the Council of People's Commissars has decided that:

(1) Monuments erected in honour of the Tsars and their officials which are of no historical or artistic interest are to be removed from the squares and streets and either be warehoused or turned to some useful public purpose.

(2) A special Commission consisting of the People's Commissars for Education and for property of the Republic, and of the superintendent of the Department of Arts attached to the Commissariat of Education, shall decide, in collaboration with the Art Colleges of Moscow and Petrograd, as to how the monuments shall be removed.

(3) This same Commission is instructed to summon artists and to arrange a competition on a wide basis for proposing designs for monuments to celebrate the great days of the Russian socialist revolution.

(4) The Council of People's Commissars expresses the wish that the most ugly of the idols may be removed by the 1st of May and that the first models of the new monuments may be exhibited for the judgment of the mass of the people.

(5) This same Commission is instructed to arrange the decorations of the town for May 1st and to replace the signs, emblems, street names, coats of arms, etc., by new ones reflecting the outlook and feelings of the worker revolutionaries of Russia.

(6) The District and Provincial Soviets are to take the same work in hand in collaboration with the above Commission.

(7) The necessary funds will be forthcoming in accordance with the detailed estimates and the decision as to their practical necessity.

Astrov, Vol. 2, p. 485.



SOVIET PROTEST OVER RUMANIAN ANNEXATION OF BESSARABIA

April 18, 1918

*Bessarabia was a long-standing bone of contention. Annexed by Russia in the 19th century, it was taken by Rumania in 1918 and then by the Soviet Union in World War II, forming the core of the contemporary Moldavian SSR. In the immediate context it was part of and reflected the larger problem of the inability to prevent the loss of the western territories. This was an official protest by Commissar of Foreign Affairs G. V. Chicherin to the government of Rumania.*

Your announcement, published in the European press, that the representatives of Bessarabia have solemnly proclaimed the incorporation of Bessarabia in Rumania and that consequently you regard Bessarabia as forming henceforth an inalienable part of the Rumanian kingdom, is not only a challenge to the Russian Federal Soviet Republic, but a most flagrant violation of the agreement to evacuate Bessarabia within two months reached between Russia and your predecessors. The incorporation of Bessarabia in Rumania is furthermore an act of violence against the Bessarabian population, who openly and unanimously protested against the Rumanian occupation. The Moldavian Peasants' Congress, held at Kishinev from 18 to 22 January of this year, notwithstanding the arrest of its chairman Rudiev and its vice-chairman Proshtitsky, and in spite of other repressive measures taken by the Rumanian military

authorities, protested unanimously against the Rumanian occupation and demanded the withdrawal of Rumanian troops from Bessarabia. Your attempt to pass off, as the expression of the will of the Bessarabian workers and peasants, the vote of the Bessarabian landlords, those arch-enemies of the Bessarabian people and supporters of exploitation, meeting under the protection of Rumanian troops, has no validity whatever in international law. Forcible annexation to Rumania will not destroy the unity and solidarity of the working masses of Bessarabia and Russia.

Degras, *Documents of Soviet Foreign Policy*, Vol. 1, p. 70.



## INTRODUCTION OF COMPULSORY MILITARY TRAINING

April 22, 1918

*The first efforts to create a new armed force relied on volunteers, especially industrial workers. It soon became obvious that this would not be adequate and the Bolsheviks turned toward conscription to fill out the new Red Army. Since the party still was oriented toward class tests of reliability, the decree provided for compulsory labor by elements of the bourgeoisie instead of military service; such labor was in fact sometimes enforced. The notion of universal military training remained an influential one in Soviet thinking after the Civil War.*

## ON COMPULSORY MILITARY TRAINING

One of the fundamental tasks of socialism is the liberation of mankind from the burden of militarism and the savagery of sanguinary conflicts between the nations. The aim of socialism is general disarmament, everlasting peace and the fraternal co-operation of all the peoples who inhabit the earth.

This aim will be realised if power in all the great capitalist countries is transferred to the working class who will wrest the means of production from the exploiters, give them over to all who labour for common use and establish the Communist order of society as the unshakable foundation of human solidarity.

As yet it is only in Russia that the working class has power. In all other countries the imperialist bourgeoisie is in power. Their policy is to suppress the Communist revolution and to enslave all weak nations. Therefore the Russian Soviet Republic, which is surrounded by enemies on every side, must create a mighty army, under whose protection the Communist re-shaping of the social order of the country may be accomplished.

The Workers' and Peasants' Government of the Republic has undertaken the immediate task of drawing all citizens into the common work and duty of defence. In this labour it comes up against the stubborn resistance of the capitalists who will not give up their economic privileges and are trying to recover the State power by conspiracies, risings and treacherous dealings with foreign imperialists.

To arm the bourgeoisie would mean continuous internal warfare in the ranks of the army and crippling the latter in its fight against the external enemy. The usurious and exploiting section of society who are not willing to take upon themselves the same duties and rights as the rest must not be allowed to possess arms. The Workers' and Peasants' Government will find a way to lay upon the bourgeoisie in one form or another a part of the burden of defending the Republic which has been subjected to the severest trials and need by the crimes of the possessing classes. But military training and arming of the people will be limited in the coming transition period to the workers and to those of the peasants who exploit no one else's labour.

Citizens aged 18 to 40 years who have been through their obligatory training will be registered as liable for military service. They are under obligation to present themselves at the first summons of the Workers' and Peasants' Government to fill up the cadres of the Red Army, which consists of the most devoted and self-sacrificing fighters for the freedom and independence of the Russian Soviet Republic and the international Socialist revolution.

(1) The following categories of citizens of the Russian Socialist Federation of Soviet Republics are subject to obligatory military training:

(a) Those of school age, the minimum to be determined by the People's Commissar for Education;

(b) Those of preparatory age from 16 to 18 years;

(c) Those of an age liable for service, *i.e.*, from 18 to 40.

Female citizens, if they so desire, may be trained in accordance with the general procedure.

Note: Persons whose religious convictions debar them from the use of arms will only be called upon to perform such part of the training which is not connected with the use of arms.

(2) The training of citizens of preparatory age and of those liable for military service is under the control of the People's Commissar for War, and training of those of school age is under the People's Commissar for Education in close collaboration with the People's Commissar for War.

(3) Workers in factories, workshops and on farms, those who work on the land and peasants who exploit no one else's labour, have all to undergo this training.

(4) The obligatory military training in the localities is to be conducted by the military commissariats (in districts, provinces, counties and volosts).

(5) Those liable will receive no payment during the time of training. Training must be so arranged that the citizens should as far as possible not be taken off their ordinary employment during the period of training.

(6) The training is to last continuously for eight weeks and not to consist of less than 12 hours in each week. The length of training for special arms of the service and the order of exercises will be laid down in a separate law.

(7) Persons who have already undergone training in the regular army can be released from training after furnishing due proofs; the procedure in their case is in general to be that of persons who have completed the obligatory training and they are to be given a certificate to this effect.

(8) The training will proceed under trained instructors according to a program approved of by the People's Commissar for War.

(9) Whoever evades his obligatory training or fulfils the duties of his training negligently will be held to account for it.

Astrov, Vol. 2, pp. 488-489.



#### LENIN, "THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT"

April 28, 1918

*Amidst the hectic events of the late winter and early spring of 1918 Lenin attempted to draw together a cohesive statement of the tasks facing the Soviet government, especially but not exclusively on economic and organizational issues. He acknowledged that coercion would be necessary in the transition from capitalism to socialism. Moreover, he argued not only that socialist democracy was a higher form of democracy, but that there was "no contradiction in*



*principle between Soviet (that is, socialist) democracy and the exercise of dictatorial powers by individuals." Written at a time when Lenin perceived a "breathing space" from external threats, he provided one of his most important statements about how the new society would be organized. The essay was first published in Izvestiia and Pravda on April 28 and then widely distributed in pamphlet form both within Russia and abroad.*

V.I. Lenin

*The International Position of the Russian Soviet Republic  
and the Fundamental Tasks of the Socialist Revolution*

Thanks to the peace which has been achieved—despite its extremely onerous character and extreme instability—the Russian Soviet Republic has gained an opportunity to concentrate its efforts for a while on the most important and most difficult aspect of the socialist revolution, namely, the task of organisation.

This task was clearly and definitely set before all the working and oppressed people in the fourth paragraph (Part 4) of the resolution adopted at the Extraordinary Congress of Soviets in Moscow on March 15, 1918, in that paragraph (or part) which speaks of the self-discipline of the working people and of the ruthless struggle against chaos and disorganization.

Of course, the peace achieved by the Russian Soviet Republic is unstable not because she is now thinking of resuming military operations; apart from bourgeois counter-revolutionaries and their henchmen (the Mensheviks and others), no sane politician thinks of doing that. The instability of the peace is due to the fact that in the imperialist states bordering on Russia to the West and the East, which command enormous military forces, the military party, tempted by Russia's momentary weakness and egged on by capitalists, who hate socialism and are eager for plunder, may gain the upper hand at any moment.

Under these circumstances the only real, not paper, guarantee of peace we have is the antagonism among the imperialist powers, which has reached extreme limits, and which is apparent on the one hand in the resumption of the imperialist butchery of the peoples in the West, and on the other hand in the extreme intensification of imperialist rivalry between Japan and America for supremacy in the Pacific and on the Pacific coast.

It goes without saying that with such an unreliable guard for protection, our Soviet Socialist Republic is in an extremely unstable and certainly critical international position. All our efforts must be exerted to the very utmost to make use of the respite given us by the combination of circumstances so that we can heal the very severe wounds inflicted by the war upon the entire social organism of Russia and bring about an economic revival, without which a real increase in our country's defence potential is inconceivable.

It also goes without saying that we shall be able to render effective assistance to the socialist revolution in the West, which has been delayed for a number of reasons, only to the extent that we are able to fulfil the task of organisation confronting us.

A fundamental condition for the successful accomplishment of the primary task of organisation confronting us is that the people's political leaders, i.e., the members of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and following them all the class-conscious representatives of the mass of the working people, shall fully appreciate the radical distinction in this respect between previous bourgeois revolutions and the present socialist revolution.

In bourgeois revolutions, the principal task of the mass of working people was to fulfil the negative or destructive work of abolishing feudalism, monarchy and medievalism. The positive or constructive work of organising the new society was carried out by the property-owning bourgeois minority of the population. And the latter carried out this task with relative ease, despite the resistance of the workers and the poor peasants, not only because the resistance of the people exploited by capital was then extremely weak, since they were scattered and uneducated, but also because the chief organising force of anarchically built capitalist society is the spontaneously growing and expanding national and international market.

In every socialist revolution, however—and consequently in the socialist revolution in Russia which we began on October 25, 1917—the principal task of the proletariat, and of the poor peasants which it leads is the positive or constructive work of setting up an extremely intricate and delicate system of new organisational relationships extending to the planned production and distribution of the goods required for the existence of tens of millions of people. Such a revolution can be successfully carried out only if the majority of the population, and primarily the majority of the working people, engage in independent creative work as makers of history. Only if the proletariat and the poor peasants display sufficient class-consciousness, devotion to principle, self-sacrifice and perseverance, will the victory of the socialist revolution be assured. By creating a new, Soviet type of state, which gives the working and oppressed people the chance to take an active part in the independent building up of a new society, we solved only a small part of this difficult problem. The principal difficulty lies in the economic sphere, namely, the introduction of the strictest and universal accounting and control of the production and distribution of goods, raising the productivity of labour and *socialising production in practice*.

The development of the Bolshevik Party, which today is the governing party in Russia, very strikingly indicates the nature of the turning-point in history we have now reached, which is the peculiar feature of the present political situation, and which calls for a new orientation of Soviet power, i.e., for a new presentation of new tasks.

The first task of every party of the future is to convince the majority of the people that its programme and tactics are correct. This task stood in the forefront both in tsarist times and in the period of the Chernovs' and Tseretelis' policy of compromise with the Kerenskys and Kishkins. This task has now been fulfilled in the main, for, as the recent Congress of Soviets in Moscow incontrovertibly proved, the majority of the workers and peasants of Russia are obviously on the side of the Bolsheviks; but of course, it is far from being completely fulfilled (and it can never be completely fulfilled).

The second task that confronted our Party was to capture political power and to suppress the resistance of the exploiters. This task has not been completely fulfilled either, and it cannot be ignored because the monarchists and Constitutional-Democrats on the one hand, and their henchmen and hangers-on, the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, on the other, are continuing their efforts to unite for the purpose of overthrowing Soviet power. In the main, however, the task of suppressing the resistance of the exploiters was fulfilled in the period from October 25, 1917, to (approximately) February 1918 or to the surrender of Bogayevsky.

A third task is now coming to the fore as the immediate task and one which constitutes the peculiar feature of the present situation, namely, the task of organising *administration* of Russia. Of course, we advanced and tackled this task on the very day following October 25, 1917. Up to now, however, since the resistance of the exploiters still took the form of open civil war, up to now the task of administration *could not* become the *main*, the *central* task.

Now it has become the main and central task. We, the Bolshevik Party, have *convinced* Russia. We have *won* Russia from the rich for the poor, from the exploiters for the working people. Now we must *administer* Russia. And the whole peculiarity of the present situation, the whole difficulty, lies in understanding *the specific features of the transition* from the principal task of convincing the people and of suppressing the exploiters by armed force to the principal task of *administration*.

For the first time in human history a socialist party has managed to complete in the main the conquest of power and the suppression of the exploiters, and has managed to *approach directly* the task of *administration*. We must prove worthy executors of this most difficult (and most gratifying) task of the socialist revolution. We must *fully realise* that in order to administer successfully, *besides* being able to convince people, *besides* being able to win a civil war, we must be able to do *practical organisational work*. This is the most difficult

task, because it is a matter of organising in a new way the most deep-rooted, the economic, foundations of life of scores of millions of people. And it is the most gratifying task, because only *after* it has been fulfilled (in the principal and main outlines) will it be possible to say that Russia *has become* not only a Soviet, but also a socialist, republic.

#### THE GENERAL SLOGAN OF THE MOMENT

The objective situation reviewed above, which has been created by the extremely onerous and unstable peace, the terrible state of ruin, the unemployment and famine we inherited from the war and the rule of the bourgeoisie (represented by Kerensky and the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries who supported him), all this has inevitably caused extreme weariness and even exhaustion of wide sections of the working people. These people insistently demand—and cannot but demand—a respite. The task of the day is to restore the productive forces destroyed by the war and by bourgeois rule; to heal the wounds inflicted by the war, by the defeat in the war, by profiteering and the attempts of the bourgeoisie to restore the overthrown rule of the exploiters; to achieve economic revival; to provide reliable protection of elementary order. It may sound paradoxical, but in fact, considering the objective conditions indicated above, it is absolutely certain that at the present moment the Soviet system can secure Russia's transition to socialism only if these very elementary, extremely elementary problems of maintaining public life are practically solved in spite of the resistance of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. In view of the specific features of the present situation, and in view of the existence of Soviet power with its land socialisation law, workers' control law, etc., the practical solution of these extremely elementary problems and the overcoming of the organisational difficulties of the first stages of progress toward socialism are now two aspects of the same picture.

Keep regular and honest accounts of money, manage economically, do not be lazy, do not steal, observe the strictest labour discipline—it is these slogans, justly scorned by the revolutionary proletariat when the bourgeoisie used them to conceal its rule as an exploiting class, that are now, since the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, becoming the immediate and the principal slogans of the moment. On the one hand, the practical application of these slogans by *the mass* of working people is the *sole* condition for the salvation of a country which has been tortured almost to death by the imperialist war and by the imperialist robbers (headed by Kerensky); on the other hand the practical application of these slogans by the *Soviet state*, by *its* methods, on the basis of *its* laws, is a necessary and *sufficient* condition for the final victory of socialism. This is precisely what those who contemptuously brush aside the idea of putting such "hackneyed" and "trivial" slogans in the forefront fail to understand. In a small peasant country, which overthrew tsarism only a year ago, and which liberated itself from the Kerenskys less than six months ago, there has naturally remained not a little of spontaneous anarchy, intensified by the brutality and savagery that accompany every protracted and reactionary war, and there has arisen a good deal of despair and aimless bitterness. And if we add to this the provocative policy of the lackeys of the bourgeoisie (the Mensheviks, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc.) it will become perfectly clear what prolonged and persistent efforts must be exerted by the best and the most class-conscious workers and peasants in order to bring about a complete change in the mood of the people and to bring them on to the proper path of steady and disciplined labour. Only such a transition brought about by the mass of the poor (the proletarians and semi-proletarians) can consummate the victory over the bourgeoisie and particularly over the peasant bourgeoisie, more stubborn and numerous.

#### THE NEW PHASE OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE BOURGEOISIE

The bourgeoisie in our country has been conquered, but it has not yet been uprooted, not yet destroyed, and not even utterly broken. That is why we are faced with a new and higher form of struggle against the bourgeoisie, the transition from the very simple task of further expropriating the capitalists to the much more complicated and difficult task of creating

conditions in which it will be impossible for the bourgeoisie to exist, or for a new bourgeoisie to arise. Clearly, this task is immeasurably more significant than the previous one; and until it is fulfilled there will be no socialism.

If we measure our revolution by the scale of West-European revolutions we shall find that at the present moment we are approximately at the level reached in 1793 and 1871. We can be legitimately proud of having risen to this level, and of having certainly, in one respect, advanced somewhat further, namely: we have decreed and introduced throughout Russia the highest *type of state*—Soviet power. Under no circumstances, however, can we rest content with what we have achieved, because we have only just started the transition to socialism, we have *not yet* done the decisive thing in *this* respect.

The decisive thing is the organisation of the strictest and country-wide accounting and control of production and distribution of goods. And yet, we have *not yet* introduced accounting and control in those enterprises and in those branches and fields of economy which we have taken away from the bourgeoisie; and without this there can be no thought of achieving the second and equally essential material condition for introducing socialism, namely, raising the productivity of labour on a national scale.

That is why the present task could not be defined by the simple formula: continue the offensive against capital. Although we have certainly not finished off capital and although it is certainly necessary to continue the offensive against this enemy of the working people, such a formula would be inexact, would not be concrete, would not take into account the *peculiarity* of the present situation in which, in order to go on advancing successfully *in the future*, we must “suspend” our offensive *now*.

This can be explained by comparing our position in the war against capital with the position of a victorious army that has captured, say, a half or two-thirds of the enemy's territory and is compelled to halt in order to muster its forces, to replenish its supplies of munitions, repair and reinforce the lines of communication, build new storehouses, bring up new reserves, etc. To suspend the offensive of a victorious army under such conditions is necessary precisely in order to gain the rest of the enemy's territory, i.e., in order to achieve complete victory. Those who have failed to understand that the objective state of affairs at the present moment dictates to us precisely such a “suspension” of the offensive against capital have failed to understand anything at all about the present political situation.

It goes without saying that we can speak about the “suspension” of the offensive against capital only in quotation marks, i.e., only metaphorically. In ordinary war, a general order can be issued to stop the offensive, the advance can actually be stopped. In the war against capital, however, the advance cannot be stopped, and there can be no thought of our abandoning the further expropriation of capital. What we are discussing is the shifting of the *centre of gravity* of our economic and political work. Up to now measures for the direct expropriation of the expropriators were *in the forefront*. Now the organisation of accounting and control in those enterprises in which the capitalists have already been expropriated, and in all other enterprises, advances *to the forefront*.

If we decided to continue to expropriate capital at the same rate at which we have been doing it up to now, we should certainly suffer defeat, because our work of organising proletarian accounting and control has obviously—obviously to every thinking person—*fallen behind* the work of *directly* “expropriating the expropriators”. If we now concentrate all our efforts on the organisation of accounting and control, we shall be able to solve this problem, we shall be able to make up for lost time, we shall *completely* win our “campaign” against capital.

But is not the admission that we must make up for lost time tantamount to admission of some kind of ad error? Not in the least. Take another military example. If it is possible to defeat and push back the enemy merely with detachments of light cavalry, it should be done. But if this can be done successfully only up to a certain point, then it is quite conceivable that when this point has been reached, it will be necessary to bring up heavy artillery. By

admitting that it is now necessary to make up for lost time in bringing up heavy artillery, we do not admit that the successful cavalry attack was a mistake.

Frequently, the lackeys of the bourgeoisie reproached us for having launched a "Red Guard" attack on capital. The reproach is absurd and is worthy only of the lackeys of the money-bags, because *at one time* the "Red Guard" attack on capital was absolutely dictated by circumstances. Firstly, *at that time* capital put up military resistance through the medium of Kerensky and Krasnov, Savinkov and Gotz (Gegechkori is putting up such resistance even now), Dutov and Bogayevsky. Military resistance cannot be broken except by military means, and the Red Guards fought in the noble and supreme historical cause of liberating the working and exploited people from the yoke of the exploiters.

Secondly, we could not at that time put methods of administration in the forefront in place of methods of suppression, because the art of administration is not innate, but is acquired by experience. At that time we lacked this experience; now we have it. Thirdly, at that time we could not have specialists in the various fields of knowledge and technology at our disposal because those specialists were either fighting in the ranks of the Bogayevskys, or were still able to put up systematic and stubborn passive resistance by way of *sabotage*. Now we have broken the sabotage. The "Red Guard" attack on capital was successful, was victorious, because we broke capital's military resistance and its resistance by sabotage.

Does that mean that a "Red Guard" attack on capital is *always* appropriate, under *all* circumstances, that we have *no other* means of fighting capital? It would be childish to think so. We achieved victory with the aid of light cavalry, but we also have heavy artillery. We achieved victory by methods of suppression; we shall be able to achieve victory also by methods of administration. We must know how to change our methods of fighting the enemy to suit changes in the situation. We shall not for a moment renounce "Red Guard" suppression of the Savinkovs and Gegechkoris and all other landowner and bourgeois counter-revolutionaries. We shall not be so foolish, however, as to put "Red Guard" methods in the forefront at a time when the period in which Red Guard attacks were necessary has, in the main, drawn to a close (and to a victorious close), and when the period of utilising bourgeois specialists by the proletarian state power for the purpose of reploughing the soil in order to prevent the growth of any bourgeoisie whatever is knocking at the door.

This is a peculiar epoch, or rather stage of development, and in order to defeat capital completely, we must be able to adapt the forms of our struggle to the peculiar conditions of this stage.

Without the guidance of experts in the various fields of knowledge, technology and experience, the transition to socialism will be impossible, because socialism calls for a conscious mass advance to greater productivity of labour compared with capitalism, and on the basis achieved by capitalism. Socialism must achieve this advance *in its own way*, by its own methods—or, to put it more concretely, by *Soviet* methods. And the specialists, because of the whole social environment which made them specialists, are, in the main, inevitably bourgeois. Had our proletariat, after capturing power, quickly solved the problem of accounting, control and organisation on a national scale (which was impossible owing to the war and Russia's backwardness), then we, after breaking the sabotage, would also have completely subordinated these bourgeois experts to ourselves by means of universal accounting and control. Owing to the considerable "delay" in introducing accounting and control generally, we, although we have managed to conquer sabotage, have *not yet* created the conditions which would place the bourgeois specialists at our disposal. The mass of saboteurs are "going to work", but the best organisers and the top experts can be utilised by the state either in the old way, in the bourgeois way (i.e., for high salaries), or in the new way, in the proletarian way (i.e., creating the conditions of national accounting and control from below, which would inevitably and of itself subordinate the experts and enlist them for our work).

Now we have to resort to the old bourgeois method and to agree to pay a very high price for the "services" of the top bourgeois experts. All those who are familiar with the subject

appreciate this, but not all ponder over the significance of this measure being adopted by the proletarian state. Clearly, this measure is a compromise, a departure from the principles of the Paris Commune and of every proletarian power, which call for the reduction of all salaries to the level of the wages of the average worker, which urge that careerism be fought not merely in words, but in deeds.

Moreover, it is clear that this measure not only implies the cessation—in a certain field and to a certain degree—of the offensive against capital (for capital is not a sum of money, but a definite social relation); it is also a *step backward* on the part of our socialist Soviet state power, which from the very outset proclaimed and pursued the policy of reducing high salaries to the level of the wages of the average worker.

Of course, the lackeys of the bourgeoisie, particularly the small fry, such as the Mensheviks, the *Novaya Zhizn* people and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, will giggle over our confession that we are taking a step backward. But we need not mind their giggling. We must study the specific features of the extremely difficult and new path to socialism without concealing our mistakes and weaknesses, and try to be prompt in doing what has been left undone. To conceal from the people the fact that the enlistment of bourgeois experts by means of extremely high salaries is a retreat from the principles of the Paris Commune would be sinking to the level of bourgeois politicians and deceiving the people. Frankly explaining how and why we took this step backward, and then publicly discussing what means are available for making up for lost time, means educating the people and learning from experience, learning together with the people how to build socialism. There is hardly a single victorious military campaign in history in which the victor did not commit certain mistakes, suffer partial reverses, temporarily yield something and in some places retreat. The “campaign” which we have undertaken against capitalism is a million times more difficult than the most difficult military campaign, and it would be silly and disgraceful to give way to despondency because of a particular and partial retreat.

We shall now discuss the question from the practical point of view. Let us assume that the Russian Soviet Republic requires one thousand first-class scientists and experts in various fields of knowledge, technology and practical experience to direct the labour of the people towards securing the speediest possible economic revival. Let us assume also that we shall have to pay these “stars of the first magnitude”—of course the majority of those who shout loudest about the corruption of the workers are themselves utterly corrupted by bourgeois morals—25,000 rubles per annum each. Let us assume that this sum (25,000,000 rubles) will have to be doubled (assuming that we have to pay bonuses for particularly successful and rapid fulfilment of the most important organisational and technical tasks), or even quadrupled (assuming that we have to enlist several hundred foreign specialists, who are more demanding). The question is, would the annual expenditure of fifty or a hundred million rubles by the Soviet Republic for the purpose of reorganising the labour of the people on modern scientific and technological lines be excessive or too heavy? Of course not. The overwhelming majority of the class-conscious workers and peasants will approve of this expenditure because they know from practical experience that our backwardness causes us to lose thousands of millions, and that we have *not yet* reached that degree of organisation, accounting and control which would induce all the “stars” of the bourgeois intelligentsia to participate voluntarily in *our* work.

It goes without saying that this question has another side to it. The corrupting influence of high salaries—both upon the Soviet authorities (especially since the revolution occurred so rapidly that it was impossible to prevent a certain number of adventurers and rogues from getting into positions of authority, and they, together with a number of inept or dishonest commissars, would not be averse to becoming “star” embezzlers of state funds) and upon the mass of the workers—is indisputable. Every thinking and honest worker and poor peasant, however, will agree with us, will admit, that we cannot immediately rid ourselves of the evil legacy of capitalism, and that we can liberate the Soviet Republic from the duty of paying an annual “tribute” of fifty million or one hundred million rubles (a tribute for

our own backwardness in organising *country-wide* accounting and control *from below*) only by organising ourselves, by tightening up discipline in our own ranks, by purging our ranks of all those who are "preserving the legacy of capitalism", who "follow the traditions of capitalism", i.e., of idlers, parasites and embezzlers of state funds (now all the land, all the factories and all the railways are the "state funds" of the Soviet Republic). If the class-conscious advanced workers and poor peasants manage with the aid of the Soviet institutions to organise, become disciplined, pull themselves together, create powerful labour discipline in the course of one year, then in a year's time we shall throw off this "tribute", which can be reduced even before that...in exact proportion to the successes we achieve in our workers' and peasants' labour discipline and organisation. The sooner we ourselves, workers and peasants, learn the best labour discipline and the most modern technique of labour, using the bourgeois experts to teach us the sooner we shall liberate ourselves from any "tribute" to these specialists.

Our work of organising country-wide accounting and control of production and distribution under the supervision of the proletariat has lagged very much behind our work of directly expropriating the expropriators. This proposition is of fundamental importance for understanding the specific features of the present situation and the tasks of the Soviet government that follow from it. The centre of gravity of our struggle against the bourgeoisie is shifting to the organisation of such accounting and control. Only with this as our starting-point will it be possible to determine correctly the immediate tasks of economic and financial policy in the sphere of nationalisation of the banks, monopolisation of foreign trade, the state control of money circulation, the introduction of a property and income tax satisfactory from the proletarian point of view, and the introduction of compulsory labour service.

We have been lagging very far behind in introducing socialist reforms in these spheres (very, very important spheres), and this is because accounting and control are insufficiently organised in general. It goes without saying that this is one of the most difficult tasks, and in view of the ruin caused by the war, it can be fulfilled only over a long period of time; but we must not forget that it is precisely here that the bourgeoisie—and particularly the numerous petty and peasant bourgeoisie—are putting up the most serious fight, disrupting the control that is already being organised, disrupting the grain monopoly, for example, and gaining positions for profiteering and speculative trade. We have far from adequately carried out the things we have decreed, and the principal task of the moment is to concentrate all efforts on the businesslike, practical *realisation* of the principles of the reforms which have already become law (but not yet reality).

In order to proceed with the nationalisation of the banks and to go on steadfastly towards transforming the banks into nodal points of public accounting under socialism, we must first of all, and above all, achieve real success in increasing the number of branches of the People's Bank, in attracting deposits, in simplifying the paying in and withdrawal of deposits by the public, in abolishing queues, in catching and *shooting* bribe-takers and rogues, etc. At first we must really carry out the simplest things, properly organise what is available, and then prepare for the more intricate things.

Consolidate and improve the state monopolies (in grain, leather, etc.) which have already been introduced, and by doing so prepare for the state monopoly of foreign trade. Without this monopoly we shall not be able to "free ourselves" from foreign capital by paying "tribute". And the possibility of building up socialism depends entirely upon whether we shall be able, by paying a certain tribute to foreign capital during a certain transitional period, to safeguard our internal economic independence.

We are also lagging very far behind in regard to the collection of taxes generally, and of the property and income tax in particular. The imposing of indemnities upon the bourgeoisie—a measure which in principle is absolutely permissible and deserves proletarian approval—shows that in this respect we are still nearer to the methods of warfare (to win Russia from the rich for the poor) than to the methods of administration. In order to become

stronger, however, and in order to be able to stand firmer on our feet, we must adopt the latter methods, we must substitute for the indemnities imposed upon the bourgeoisie the constant and regular collection of a property and income tax, which will bring a *greater* return to the proletarian state, and which calls for better organisation on our part and better accounting and control.

The fact that we are late in introducing compulsory labour service also shows that the work that is coming to the fore at the present time is precisely the preparatory organisational work that, on the one hand, will finally consolidate our gains and that, on the other, is necessary in order to prepare for the operation of "surrounding" capital and compelling it to "surrender". We ought to begin introducing compulsory labour service immediately, but we must do so very gradually and circumspectly, testing every step by practical experience, and, of course, taking the first step by introducing compulsory labour service *for the rich*. The introduction of work and consumers' budget books for every bourgeois, including every rural bourgeois, would be an important step towards completely "surrounding" the enemy and towards the creation of a truly popular accounting and control of the production and distribution of goods.

#### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STRUGGLE FOR COUNTRY-WIDE ACCOUNTING AND CONTROL

The state, which for centuries has been an organ for oppression and robbery of the people, has left us a legacy of the people's supreme hatred and suspicion of everything that is connected with the state. It is very difficult to overcome this, and only a Soviet government can do it. Even a Soviet government, however, will require plenty of time and enormous perseverance to accomplish it. This "legacy" is especially apparent in the problem of accounting and control—the fundamental problem facing the socialist revolution on the morrow of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. A certain amount of time will inevitably pass before the people, who feel free for the first time now that the landowners and the bourgeoisie have been overthrown, will understand—not from books, but from their own, *Soviet* experience—will understand and *feel* that without comprehensive state accounting and control of the production and distribution of goods, the power of the working people, the freedom of the working people, *cannot* be maintained, and that a return to the yoke of capitalism is *inevitable*.

All the habits and traditions of the bourgeoisie, and of the petty bourgeoisie in particular, also oppose *state* control, and uphold the inviolability of "sacred private property", of "sacred" private enterprise. It is now particularly clear to us how correct is the Marxist thesis that anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism are *bourgeois* trends, how irreconcilably opposed they are to socialism, proletarian dictatorship and communism. The fight to instil into the people's minds the idea of *Soviet* state control and accounting, and to carry out this idea in practice; the fight to break with the rotten past, which taught the people to regard the procurement of bread and clothes as a "private" affair, and buying and selling as a transaction "which concerns only myself"—is a great fight of world-historic significance, a fight between socialist consciousness and bourgeois-anarchist spontaneity.

We have introduced workers' control as a law, but this law is only just beginning to operate and is only just beginning to penetrate the minds of broad sections of the proletariat. In our agitation we do not sufficiently explain that lack of accounting and control in the production and distribution of goods means the death of the rudiments of socialism, means the embezzlement of state funds (for all property belongs to the state and the state is the Soviet state in which power belongs to the majority of the working people). We do not sufficiently explain that carelessness in accounting and control is downright aiding and abetting the German and the Russian Kornilovs, who can overthrow the power of the working people *only* if we fail to cope with the task of accounting and control, and who, with the aid of the whole of the rural bourgeoisie, with the aid of the Constitutional-Democrats, the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, are "watching" us and waiting for an opportune



moment to attack us. And the advanced workers and peasants do not think and speak about this sufficiently. Until workers' control has become a fact, until the advanced workers have organised and carried out a victorious and ruthless crusade against the violators of this control, or against those who are careless in matters of control, it will be impossible to pass from the first step (from workers' control) to the second step towards socialism, i.e., to pass on to workers' regulation of production.

The socialist state can arise only as a network of producers' and consumers' communes, which conscientiously keep account of their production and consumption, economise on labour, and steadily raise the productivity of labour, thus making it possible to reduce the working day to seven, six and even fewer hours. Nothing will be achieved unless the strictest, country-wide, comprehensive accounting and control of *grain* and the *production of grain* (and later of all other essential goods) are set going. Capitalism left us a legacy of mass organisations which can facilitate our transition to the mass accounting and control of the distribution of goods, namely, the consumers' co-operative societies. In Russian these societies are not so well developed as in the advanced countries, nevertheless, they have over ten million members. The Decree on Consumers' Co-operative Societies, issued the other day, is an extremely significant phenomenon, which strikingly illustrates the peculiar position and the specific tasks of the Soviet Socialist Republic at the present moment.

The decree is an agreement with the bourgeois co-operative societies and the workers' co-operative societies which still adhere to the bourgeois point of view. It is an agreement, or compromise, firstly because the representatives of the above-mentioned institutions not only took part in discussing the decree, but actually had a decisive say in the matter, for the parts of the decree which were strongly opposed by these institutions were dropped. Secondly, the essence of the compromise is that the Soviet government has abandoned the principle of admission of new members to co-operative societies without entrance fees (which is the only consistently proletarian principle); it has also abandoned the idea of uniting the whole population of a given locality in a *single* co-operative society. Contrary to this principle, which is the only socialist principle and which corresponds to the task of abolishing classes, the "working-class co-operative societies" (which in this case call themselves "class" societies only because they subordinate themselves to the class interests of the bourgeoisie) were given the right to continue to exist. Finally, the Soviet government's proposal to expel the bourgeoisie entirely from the boards of the co-operative societies was also considerably modified, and only owners of private capitalist trading and industrial enterprises were forbidden to serve on the boards.

Had the proletariat, acting through the Soviet government, managed to organise accounting and control on a national scale, or at least laid the foundation for such control, it would not have been necessary to make such compromises. Through the food departments of the Soviets, through the supply organisations under the Soviets we should have organised the population into a single co-operative society under proletarian management. We should have done this without the assistance of the bourgeois co-operative societies, without making any concession to the purely bourgeois principle which prompts the workers' co-operative societies to remain workers' societies *side by side* with bourgeois societies, *instead of* subordinating these bourgeois co-operative societies entirely to themselves, merging the two together and taking the *entire* management of the society and the supervision of the consumption of the rich *in their own hands*.

In concluding such an agreement with the bourgeois co-operative societies, the Soviet government concretely defined its tactical aims and its peculiar methods of action in the present stage of development as follows: by directing the bourgeois elements, utilising them, making certain partial concessions to them, we create the conditions for further progress that will be slower than we at first anticipated, but surer, with the base and lines of communication better secured and with the positions which have been won better consolidated. The Soviets can (*and should*) now gauge their successes in the field of socialist construction, among other

things, by extremely clear, simple and practical standards, namely, in how many communities (communes or villages, or blocks of houses, etc.) co-operative societies have been organised, and to what extent their development has reached the point of embracing the whole population.

### RAISING THE PRODUCTIVITY OF LABOUR

In every socialist revolution, after the proletariat has solved the problem of capturing power, and to the extent that the task of expropriating the expropriators and suppressing their resistance has been carried out in the main, there necessarily comes to the forefront the fundamental task of creating a social system superior to capitalism, namely, raising the productivity of labour, and in this connection (and for this purpose) securing better organisation of labour. Our Soviet state is precisely in the position where, thanks to the victories over the exploiters—from Kerensky to Kornilov—it is able to approach this task directly, to tackle it in earnest. And here it becomes immediately clear that while it is possible to take over the central government in a few days, while it is possible to suppress the military resistance (and sabotage) of the exploiters even in different parts of a great country in a few weeks, the capital solution of the problem of raising the productivity of labour requires, at all events (particularly after a most terrible and devastating war), several years. The protracted nature of the work is certainly dictated by objective circumstances.

The raising of the productivity of labour first of all requires that the material basis of large-scale industry shall be assured, namely, the development of the production of fuel, iron, the engineering and chemical industries. The Russian Soviet Republic enjoys the favourable position of having at its command, even after the Brest peace, enormous reserves of ore (in the Urals), fuel in Western Siberia (coal), in the Caucasus and the South-East (oil), in Central Russia (peat), enormous timber reserves, water power, raw materials for the chemical industry (Karabugaz), etc. The development of these natural resources by methods of modern technology will provide the basis for the unprecedented progress of the productive forces.

Another condition for raising the productivity of labour is, firstly, the raising of the educational and cultural level of the mass of the population. This is now taking place extremely rapidly, a fact which those who are blinded by bourgeois routine are unable to see; they are unable to understand what an urge towards enlightenment and initiative is now developing among the “lower ranks” of the people thanks to the Soviet form of organisation. Secondly, a condition for economic revival is the raising of the working people’s discipline, their skill, the effectiveness, the intensity of labour and its better organisation.

In this respect the situation is particularly bad and even hopeless if we are to believe those who have allowed themselves to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie or by those who are serving the bourgeoisie for their own ends. These people do not understand that there has not been, nor could there be, a revolution in which the supporters of the old system did not raise a howl about chaos, anarchy, etc. Naturally, among the people who have only just thrown off an unprecedentedly savage yoke there is deep and widespread seething and ferment; the working out of new principles of labour discipline by the people is a very protracted process, and this process could not even start until complete victory had been achieved over the landowners and the bourgeoisie.

We, however, without in the least yielding to the despair (it is often false despair) which is spread by the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intellectuals (who have despaired of retaining their old privileges), must under no circumstances conceal an obvious evil. On the contrary, we shall expose it and intensify the Soviet methods of combating it, because the victory of socialism is inconceivable without the victory of proletarian conscious discipline over spontaneous petty-bourgeois anarchy, this is real guarantee of a possible restoration of Kerenskyism and Kornilovism.

The more class-conscious vanguard of the Russian proletariat has already set itself the task of raising labour discipline. For example, both the Central Committee of the

Metalworkers' Union and the Central Council of Trade Unions have begun to draft the necessary measures and decrees. This work must be supported and pushed ahead with all speed. We must raise the question of piece-work and apply and test it in practice; we must raise the question of applying much of what is scientific and progressive in the Taylor system; we must make wages correspond to the total amount of goods turned out, or to the amount of work done by the railways, the water transport system, etc., etc.

The Russian is a bad worker compared with people in advanced countries. It could not be otherwise under the tsarist regime and in view of the persistence of the hangover from serfdom. The task that the Soviet government must set the people in all its scope is—learn to work. The Taylor system, the last word of capitalism in this respect, like all capitalist progress, is a combination of the refined brutality of bourgeois exploitation and a number of the greatest scientific achievements in the field of analysing mechanical motions during work, the elimination of superfluous and awkward motions, the elaboration of correct methods of work, the introduction of the best system of accounting and control, etc. The Soviet Republic must at all costs adopt all that is valuable in the achievements of science and technology in this field. The possibility of building socialism depends exactly upon our success in combining the Soviet power and the Soviet organisation of administration with the up-to-date achievements of capitalism. We must organise in Russia the study and teaching of the Taylor system and systematically try it out and adapt it to our own ends. At the same time, in working to raise the productivity of labour, we must take into account the specific features of the transition period from capitalism to socialism, which, on the one hand, require that the foundations be laid of the socialist organisation of competition, and, on the other hand, require the use of compulsion, so that the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat shall not be desecrated by the practice of a lily-livered proletarian government.

#### THE ORGANISATION OF COMPETITION

Among the absurdities which the bourgeoisie are fond of spreading about socialism is the allegation that socialists deny the importance of competition. In fact, it is only socialism which, by abolishing classes, and, consequently, by abolishing the enslavement of the people, for the first time opens the way for competition on a really mass scale. And it is precisely the Soviet form of organisation, by ensuring transition from the formal democracy of the bourgeois republic to real participation of the mass of working people in *administration*, that for the first time puts competition on a broad basis. It is much easier to organise this in the political field than in the economic field; but for the success of socialism, it is the economic field that matters.

Take, for example, a means of organising competition such as publicity. The bourgeois republic ensures publicity only formally; in practice, it subordinates the press to capital, entertains the "mob" with sensationalist political trash and conceals what takes place in the workshops, in commercial transactions, contracts, etc., behind a veil of "trade secrets", which protect "the sacred right of property". The Soviet government has abolished trade secrets; it has taken a new path; but we have done hardly anything to utilise publicity for the purpose of encouraging economic competition. While ruthlessly suppressing the thoroughly mendacious and insolently slanderous bourgeois press, we must set to work systematically to create a press that will not entertain and fool the people with political sensation and trivialities, but which will submit the questions of everyday economic life to the people's judgement and assist in the serious study of these questions. Every factory, every village is a producers' and consumers' commune, whose right and duty it is to apply the general Soviet laws in their own way ("in their own way", not in the sense of violating them, but in the sense that they can apply them in various forms) and in their own way to solve the problem of accounting in the production and distribution of goods. Under capitalism, this was the "private affair" of the individual capitalist, landowner or kulak. Under the Soviet system, it is not a private affair, but a most important affair of state.

We have scarcely yet started on the enormous, difficult but rewarding task of organising competition between communes, of introducing accounting and publicity in the process of the production of grain, clothes and other things, of transforming dry, dead, bureaucratic accounts into living examples, some repulsive, others attractive. Under the capitalist mode of production, the significance of individual example, say the example of a co-operative workshop, was inevitably very much restricted, and only those imbued with petty-bourgeois illusions could dream of "correcting" capitalism through the example of virtuous institutions. After political power has passed to the proletariat, after the expropriators have been expropriated, the situation radically changes and—as prominent socialists have repeatedly pointed out—force of example for the first time is able to influence the people. Model communes must and will serve as educators, teachers, helping to raise the backward communes. The press must serve as an instrument of socialist construction, give publicity to the successes achieved by the model communes in all their details, must study the causes of these successes, the methods of management these communes employ, and, on the other hand, must put on the "black list" those communes which persist in the "traditions of capitalism", i.e., anarchy, laziness, disorder and profiteering. In capitalist society, statistics were entirely a matter for "government servants", or for narrow specialists; we must carry statistics to the people and make them popular so that the working people themselves may gradually learn to understand and see how long and in what way it is necessary to work, how much time and in what way one may rest, so that *the comparison of the business results* of the various communes may become a matter of general interest and study, and that the most outstanding communes may be rewarded immediately (by reducing the working day, raising remuneration, placing a larger amount of cultural or aesthetic facilities or values at their disposal, etc.).

When a new class comes on to the historical scene as the leader and guide of society, a period of violent "rocking", shocks, struggle and storm, on the one hand, and a period of uncertain steps, experiments, wavering, hesitation in regard to the selection of new methods corresponding to new objective circumstances, on the other, are inevitable. The moribund feudal nobility avenged themselves on the bourgeoisie which vanquished them and took their place, not only by conspiracies and attempts at rebellion and restoration, but also by pouring ridicule over the lack of skill, the clumsiness and the mistakes of the "upstarts" and the "insolent" who dared to take over the "sacred helm" of state without the centuries of training which the princes, barons, nobles and dignitaries had had; in exactly the same way the Kornilovs and Kerenskys, the Gotzes and Martovs, the whole of that fraternity of heroes of bourgeois swindling or bourgeois scepticism, avenge themselves on the working class of Russia for having had the "audacity" to take power.

Of course, not weeks, but long months and years are required for a new social class, especially a class which up to now has been oppressed and crushed by poverty and ignorance, to get used to its new position, look around, organise its work and promote its *own* organisers. It is understandable that the Party which leads the revolutionary proletariat has not been able to acquire the experience and habits of large organisational undertakings embracing millions and tens of millions of citizens; the remoulding of the old, almost exclusively agitators' habits is a very lengthy process. But there is nothing impossible in this, and as soon as the necessity for a change is clearly appreciated, as soon as there is firm determination to effect the change and perseverance in pursuing a great and difficult aim, we shall achieve it. There is an enormous amount of organising talent among the "people", i.e., among the workers and the peasants who do not exploit the labour of others. Capital crushed these talented people in thousands; it killed their talent and threw them on to the scrap-heap. We are not yet able to find them, encourage them, put them on their feet, promote them. But we shall learn to do so if we set about it with all-out revolutionary enthusiasm, without which there can be no victorious revolutions.

No profound and mighty popular movement has ever occurred in history without dirty scum rising to the top, without adventurers and rogues, boasters and ranters attaching themselves to the inexperienced innovators, without absurd muddle and fuss, without individual "leaders" trying to deal with twenty matters at once and not finishing any of them. Let the lap-dogs of bourgeois society, from Belorussov to Martov, squeal and yelp about every extra chip that is sent flying in cutting down the big, old wood. What else are lap-dogs for if not to yelp at the proletarian elephant? Let them yelp. We shall go our way and try as carefully and as patiently as possible to test and discover real organisers, people with sober and practical minds, people who combine loyalty to socialism with ability without fuss (and in spite of muddle and fuss) to get a large number of people working together steadily and concertedly within the framework of Soviet organisation. *Only* such people, after they have been tested a dozen times, by being transferred from the simplest to the more difficult tasks, should be promoted to the responsible posts of leaders of the people's labour, leaders of administration. We have not yet learned to do this, but we shall learn.

#### "HARMONIOUS ORGANISATION" AND DICTATORSHIP

The resolution adopted by the recent Moscow Congress of Soviets advanced as the primary task of the moment the establishment of a "harmonious organisation", and the tightening of discipline. Everyone now readily "votes for" and "subscribes to" resolutions of this kind; but usually people do not think over the fact that the application of such resolutions calls for coercion—coercion precisely in the form of dictatorship. And yet it would be extremely stupid and absurdly utopian to assume that the transition from capitalism to socialism is possible without coercion and without dictatorship. Marx's theory very definitely opposed this petty-bourgeois-democratic and anarchist absurdity long ago. And Russia of 1917-18 confirms the correctness of Marx's theory in this respect so strikingly, palpably and imposingly that only those who are hopelessly dull or who have obstinately decided to turn their backs on the truth can be under any misapprehension concerning this. Either the dictatorship of Kornilov (if we take him as the Russian type of bourgeois Cavaignac), or the dictatorship of the proletariat—any other choice is *out of the question* for a country which is developing at an extremely rapid rate with extremely sharp turns and amidst desperate ruin created by one of the most horrible wars in history. Every solution that offers a middle path is either a deception of the people by the bourgeoisie—for the bourgeoisie dare not tell the truth, dare not say that they need Kornilov—or an expression of the dull-wittedness of the petty-bourgeois democrats, of the Chernovs, Tseretelis and Martovs, who chatter about the unity of democracy, the dictatorship of democracy, the general democratic front, and similar nonsense. Those whom even the progress of the Russian Revolution of 1917-18 has not taught that a middle course is impossible, must be given up for lost.

On the other hand, it is not difficult to see that during every transition from capitalism to socialism, dictatorship is necessary for two main reasons, or along two main channels. Firstly, capitalism cannot be defeated and eradicated without the ruthless suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, who cannot at once be deprived of their wealth, of their advantages of organisation and knowledge, and consequently for a fairly long period will inevitably try to overthrow the hated rule of the poor; secondly, every great revolution, and a socialist revolution in particular, even if there is no external war, is inconceivable without internal war, i.e., civil war, which is even more devastating than external war, and involves thousands and millions of cases of wavering and desertion from one side to another, implies a state of extreme indefiniteness, lack of equilibrium and chaos. And of course, all the elements of disintegration of the old society, which are inevitably very numerous and connected mainly with the petty bourgeoisie (because it is the petty bourgeoisie that every war and every crisis ruins and destroys first), are bound to "reveal themselves" during such a profound revolution. And these elements of disintegration *cannot* "reveal themselves" otherwise than in an increase of crime, hooliganism, corruption, profiteering and outrages of every kind. To put these down requires time and *requires an iron hand*.

There has not been a single great revolution in history in which the people did not instinctively realise this and did not show salutary firmness by shooting thieves on the spot. The misfortune of previous revolutions was that the revolutionary enthusiasm of the people, which sustained them in their state of tension and gave them the strength to suppress ruthlessly the elements of disintegration, did not last long. The social, i.e., the class, reason for this instability of the revolutionary enthusiasm of the people was the weakness of the proletariat, which *alone* is able (if it is sufficiently numerous, class-conscious and disciplined) to win over to its side *the majority* of the working and exploited people (the majority of the poor, to speak more simply and popularly) and retain power sufficiently long to suppress completely all the exploiters as well as all the elements of disintegration.

It was this historical experience of all revolutions, it was this world-historic—economic and political—lesson that Marx summed up when he gave his short, sharp, concise and expressive formula: dictatorship of the proletariat. And the fact that the Russian revolution has been correct in its approach to this world-historic task *has been proved* by the victorious progress of the Soviet form of organisation among all the peoples and tongues of Russia. For Soviet power is nothing but an organisational form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the advanced class, which raises to a new democracy and to independent participation in the administration of the state tens upon tens of millions of working and exploited people, who by their own experience learn to regard the disciplined and class-conscious vanguard of the proletariat as their most reliable leader.

Dictatorship, however, is a big word, and big words should not be thrown about carelessly. Dictatorship is iron rule, government that is revolutionarily bold, swift and ruthless in suppressing both exploiters and hooligans. But our government is excessively mild, very often it resembles jelly more than iron. We must not forget for a moment that the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois element is fighting against the Soviet system in two ways; on the one hand, it is operating from without, by the methods of the Savinkovs, Gotzes, Gegechkoris and Kornilovs, by conspiracies and rebellions, and by their filthy “ideological” reflection, the flood of lies and slander in the Constitutional-Democratic, Right Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik press; on the other hand, this element operates from within and takes advantage of every manifestation of disintegration, of every weakness, in order to bribe, to increase indiscipline, laxity and chaos. The nearer we approach the complete military suppression of the bourgeoisie, the more dangerous does the element of petty-bourgeois anarchy become. And the fight against this element cannot be waged solely with the aid of propaganda and agitation, solely by organising competition and by selecting organisers. The struggle must also be waged by means of coercion.

As the fundamental task of the government becomes, not military suppression, but administration, the typical manifestation of suppression and compulsion will be, not shooting on the spot, but trial by court. In this respect also the revolutionary people after October 25, 1917 took the right path and demonstrated the viability of the revolution by setting up their own workers' and peasants' courts, even before the decrees dissolving the bourgeois bureaucratic judiciary were passed. But our revolutionary and people's courts are extremely, incredibly weak. One feels that we have not yet done away with the people's attitude towards the courts as towards something official and alien, an attitude inherited from the yoke of the landowners and of the bourgeoisie. It is not yet sufficiently realised that the courts are an organ which enlists precisely the poor, every one of them, in the work of state administration (for the work of the courts is one of the functions of state administration), that the courts are an *organ of the power* of the proletariat and of the poor peasants, that the courts are an instrument for *inculcating discipline*. There is not yet sufficient appreciation of the simple and obvious fact that if the principal misfortunes of Russia at the present time are hunger and unemployment, these misfortunes cannot be overcome by spurts, but only by comprehensive, all-embracing, country-wide organisation and discipline in order to increase the output of bread for the people and bread for industry (fuel), to transport these in good time to the places where they are required, and to distribute them properly; and it is not fully

appreciated that, consequently, it is *those* who violate labour discipline at any factory, in any undertaking, in any matter, who are *responsible* for the sufferings caused by the famine and unemployment, that we must know how to find the guilty ones, to bring them to trial and ruthlessly punish them. Where the petty-bourgeois anarchy against which we must now wage a most persistent struggle makes itself felt is in the failure to appreciate the economic and political connection between famine and unemployment, on the one hand, and general laxity in matters of organisation and discipline, on the other—in the tenacity of the *small-proprietor* outlook, namely, I'll grab all I can for myself; the rest can go hang.

In the rail transport service, which perhaps most strikingly embodies the economic ties of an organism created by large-scale capitalism, the struggle between the element of petty-bourgeois laxity and proletarian organisation is particularly evident. The "administrative" elements provide a host of saboteurs and bribe-takers; the best part of the proletarian elements fight for discipline; but among both elements there are, of course, many waverers and "weak" characters who are unable to withstand the "temptation" of profiteering, bribery, personal gain obtained by spoiling the whole apparatus, upon the proper working of which the victory over famine and unemployment depends.

The struggle that has been developing around the recent decree on the management of the railways, the decree which grants individual executives dictatorial powers (or "unlimited" powers), is characteristic. The conscious (and to a large extent, probably, unconscious) representatives of petty-bourgeois laxity would like to see in this granting of "unlimited" (i.e., dictatorial) powers to individuals a departure from the collegiate principle, from democracy and from the principles of Soviet government. Here and there, among Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, a positively hooligan agitation, i.e., agitation appealing to the base instincts and to the small proprietor's urge to "grab all he can", has been developed against the dictatorship decree. The question has become one of really enormous significance. Firstly, the question of principle, namely, is the appointment of individuals, dictators with unlimited powers, in general compatible with the fundamental principles of Soviet government? Secondly, what relation has this case—this precedent, if you will—to the special tasks of government in the present concrete situation? We must deal very thoroughly with both these questions.

That in the history of revolutionary movements the dictatorship of individuals was very often the expression, the vehicle, the channel of the dictatorship of the revolutionary classes has been shown by the irrefutable experience of history. Undoubtedly, the dictatorship of individuals was compatible with bourgeois democracy. On this point, however, the bourgeois denigrators of the Soviet system, as well as their petty-bourgeois henchmen, always display sleight of hand: on the one hand, they declare the Soviet system to be something absurd, anarchistic and savage, and carefully pass over in silence all our historical examples and theoretical arguments which prove that the Soviets are a higher form of democracy, and what is more, the beginning of a *socialist* form of democracy; on the other hand, they demand of us a higher democracy than bourgeois democracy and say: personal dictatorship is absolutely incompatible with your, Bolshevik (i.e., not bourgeois, *but socialist*), Soviet democracy.

These are exceedingly poor arguments. If we are not anarchists, we must admit that the state, *that is, coercion*, is necessary for the transition from capitalism to socialism. The form of coercion is determined by the degree of development of the given revolutionary class, and also by special circumstances, such as, for example, the legacy of a long and reactionary war and the forms of resistance put up by the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie. There is, therefore, absolutely *no* contradiction in principle between Soviet (*that is, socialist*) democracy and the exercise of dictatorial powers by individuals. The difference between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois dictatorship is that the former strikes at the exploiting minority in the interests of the exploited majority, and that it is exercised—*also through*

*individuals*—not only by the working and exploited people, but also by organisations which are built in such a way as to rouse these people to history-making activity. (The Soviet organisations are organisations of this kind.)

In regard to the second question, concerning the significance of individual dictatorial powers from the point of view of the specific tasks of the present moment, it must be said that large-scale machine industry—which is precisely the material source, the productive source, the foundation of socialism—calls for absolute and strict *unity of will*, which directs the joint labours of hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands of people. The technical, economic and historical necessity of this is obvious, and all those who have thought about socialism have always regarded it as one of the conditions of socialism. But how can strict unity of will be ensured? By thousands subordinating their will to the will of one.

Given ideal class-consciousness and discipline on the part of those participating in the common work, this subordination would be something like the mild leadership of a conductor of an orchestra. It may assume the sharp forms of a dictatorship if ideal discipline and class-consciousness are lacking. But be that as it may, *unquestioning subordination* to a single will is absolutely necessary for the success of processes organised on the pattern of large-scale machine industry. On the railways it is twice and three times as necessary. In this transition from one political task to another, which *on the surface* is totally dissimilar to the first, lies the whole originality of the present situation. The revolution has only just smashed the oldest, strongest and heaviest of fetters, to which the people submitted under duress. That was yesterday. Today, however, the same revolution demands—precisely in the interests of its development and consolidation, precisely in the interests of socialism—that the people *unquestioningly obey the single will* of the leaders of labour. Of course, such a transition cannot be made at one step. Clearly, it can be achieved only as a result of tremendous jolts, shocks, reversions to old ways, the enormous exertion of effort on the part of the proletarian vanguard, which is leading the people to the new ways. Those who drop into the philistine hysterics of *Novaya Zhizn* or *Vperyod*, *Dyelo Naroda* or *Nash Vek* do not stop to think about this.

Take the psychology of the average, ordinary representative of the toiling and exploited masses, compare it with the objective, material conditions of his life in society. Before the October Revolution he did *not* see a single instance of the propertied, exploiting classes making any real sacrifice for him, giving up anything for his benefit. He did *not* see them giving him the land and liberty that had been repeatedly promised him, giving him peace, sacrificing “Great Power” interests and the interests of Great Power secret treaties, sacrificing capital and profits. He saw this only *after* October 25, 1917, when he took it himself by force, and had to defend by force what he had taken, against the Kerenskys, Gotzes, Gegechkoris, Dutovs and Kornilovs. Naturally, for a certain time, all his attention, all his thoughts, all his spiritual strength, were concentrated on taking a breath, on unbending his back, on straightening his shoulders, on taking the blessings of life that were there for the taking, and that had always been denied him by the now overthrown exploiters. Of course, a certain amount of time is required to enable the ordinary working man not only to see for himself, not only to become convinced, but also to feel that he cannot simply “take”, snatch, grab things, that this leads to increased disruption, to ruin, to the return of the Kornilovs. The corresponding change in the conditions of life (and consequently in the psychology) of the ordinary working men is only just beginning. And our whole task, the task of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks), which is the class-conscious spokesman for the strivings of the exploited for emancipation, is to appreciate this change, to understand that it is necessary, to stand at the head of the exhausted people who are wearily seeking a way out and lead them along the true path, along the path of labour discipline, along the path of co-ordinating the task of arguing at mass meetings *about* the conditions of work with the task of unquestioningly obeying the will of the Soviet leader, of the dictator, *during* the work.



The "mania for meetings" is an object of the ridicule, and still more often of the spiteful hissing of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks, the *Novaya Zhizn* people, who see only the chaos, the confusion and the outbursts of small-proprietor egoism. But without the discussions at public meetings the mass of the oppressed could never have changed from the discipline forced upon them by the exploiters to conscious, voluntary discipline. The airing of questions at public meetings is the genuine democracy of the working people, their way of unbending their backs, their awakening to a new life, their first steps along the road which they themselves have cleared of vipers (the exploiters, the imperialists, the landowners and capitalists) and which they want to learn to build themselves, in their own way, for themselves, on the principles of their own Soviet, and not alien, not aristocratic, not bourgeois rule. It required precisely the October victory of the working people over the exploiters, it required a whole historical period in which the working people themselves could first of all discuss the new conditions of life and the new tasks, in order to make possible the durable transition to superior forms of labour discipline, to the conscious appreciation of the necessity for the dictatorship of the proletariat, to unquestioning obedience to the orders of individual representatives of the Soviet government during the work.

This transition has now begun.

We have successfully fulfilled the first task of the revolution; we have seen how the mass of working people evolved in themselves the fundamental condition for its success: they united their efforts against the exploiters in order to overthrow them. Stages like that of October 1905, February and October 1917 are of world-historic significance.

We have successfully fulfilled the second task of the revolution: to awaken, to raise those very "lower ranks" of society whom the exploiters had pushed down, and who only after October 25, 1917 obtained complete freedom to overthrow the exploiters and to begin to take stock of things and arrange life in their own way. The airing of questions at public meetings by the most oppressed and downtrodden, by the least educated mass of working people, their coming over to the side of the Bolsheviks, their setting up everywhere of their own Soviet organisations—this was the second great stage of the revolution.

The third stage is now beginning. We must consolidate what we ourselves have won, what we ourselves have decreed, made law, discussed, planned—consolidate all this in stable forms of *everyday labour discipline*. This is the most difficult, but the most gratifying task, because only its fulfilment will give us a socialist system. We must learn to combine the "public meeting" democracy of the working people—turbulent, surging, overflowing its banks like a spring flood—with *iron* discipline while at work, with *unquestioning obedience* to the will of a single person, the Soviet leader, while at work.

We have not yet learned to do this.

We shall learn it.

Yesterday we were menaced by the restoration of bourgeois exploitation, personified by the Kornilovs, Gotzes, Dutovs, Gegechkoris and Bogayevskys. We conquered them. This restoration, this very same restoration menaces us today in another form, in the form of the element of petty-bourgeois laxity and anarchism, or small-proprietor "it's not my business" psychology, in the form of the daily, petty, but numerous sorties and attacks of this element against proletarian discipline. We must, and we shall, vanquish this element of petty-bourgeois anarchy.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET ORGANISATION

The socialist character of Soviet, i.e., *proletarian*, democracy, as concretely applied today, lies first in the fact that the electors are the working and exploited people; the bourgeoisie is excluded. Secondly, it lies in the fact that all bureaucratic formalities and restrictions of elections are abolished; the people themselves determine the order and time of elections, and are completely free to recall any elected person. Thirdly, it lies in the creation of the best mass organisation of the vanguard of the working people, i.e., the proletariat engaged

in large-scale industry, which enables it to lead the vast mass of the exploited, to draw them into independent political life, to educate them politically by their own experience; therefore for the first time a start is made by the *entire* population in learning the art of administration, and in beginning to administer.

These are the principal distinguishing features of the democracy now applied in Russia, which is a higher *type* of democracy, a break with the bourgeois distortion of democracy, transition to socialist democracy and to the conditions in which the state can begin to wither away.

It goes without saying that the element of petty-bourgeois disorganisation (which must *inevitably* be apparent to some extent in *every* proletarian revolution, and which is especially apparent in our revolution, owing to the petty-bourgeois character of our country, its backwardness and the consequences of a reactionary war) cannot but leave its impress upon the Soviets as well.

We must work unremittingly to develop the organisation of the Soviets and of the Soviet government. There is a petty-bourgeois tendency to transform the members of the Soviets into "parliamentarians", or else into bureaucrats. We must combat this by drawing *all* the members of the Soviets into the practical work of administration. In many places the departments of the Soviets are gradually merging with the Commissariats. Our aim is to draw *the whole of the poor* into the practical work of administration, and all steps that are taken in this direction—the more varied they are, the better—should be carefully recorded, studied, systematised, tested by wider experience and embodied in law. Our aim is to ensure that *every* toiler, having finished his eight hours "task" in productive labour, shall perform state duties *without pay*; the transition to this is particularly difficult, but this transition alone can guarantee the final consolidation of socialism. Naturally, the novelty and difficulty of the change lead to an abundance of steps being taken, as it were, gropingly, to an abundance of mistakes, vacillation—without this, any marked progress is impossible. The reason why the present position seems peculiar to many of those who would like to be regarded as socialists is that they have been accustomed to contrasting capitalism with socialism abstractly, and that they profoundly put between the two the word "leap" (some of them, recalling fragments of what they have read of Engels' writings, still more profoundly add the phrase "leap from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom"). The majority of these so-called socialists, who have "read in books" about socialism but who have never seriously thought over the matter, are unable to consider that by "leap" the teachers of socialism meant turning-points on a world-historical scale, and that leaps of this kind extend over decades and even longer periods. Naturally, in such times, the notorious "intelligentsia" provides an infinite number of mourners of the dead. Some mourn over the Constituent Assembly, others mourn over bourgeois discipline, others again mourn over the capitalist system, still others mourn over the cultured landowner, and still others again mourn over imperialist Great Power policy, etc., etc.

The real interest of the epoch of great leaps lies in the fact that the abundance of fragments of the old, which sometimes accumulate more rapidly than the rudiments (not always immediately discernible) of the new, calls for the ability to discern what is most important in the line or chain of development. History knows moments when the most important thing for the success of the revolution is to heap up as large a quantity of the fragments as possible, i.e., to blow up as many of the old institutions as possible; moments arise when enough has been blown up and the next task is to perform the "prosaic" (for the petty-bourgeois revolutionary, the "boring") task of clearing away the fragments; and moments arise when the careful nursing of the rudiments of the new system, which are growing amidst the wreckage on a soil which as yet has been badly cleared of rubble, is the most important thing.

It is not enough to be a revolutionary and an adherent of socialism or a Communist in general. You must be able at each particular moment to find the particular link in the chain which you must grasp with all your might in order to hold the whole chain and to prepare

firmly for the transition to the next link; the order of the links, their form, the manner in which they are linked together, the way they differ from each other in the historical chain of events, are not as simple and not as meaningless as those in an ordinary chain made by a smith.

The fight against the bureaucratic distortion of the Soviet form of organisation is assured by the firmness of the connection between the Soviets and the "people", meaning by that the working and exploited people, and by the flexibility and elasticity of this connection. Even in the most democratic capitalist republics in the world, the poor never regard the bourgeois parliament as "their" institution. But the Soviets are "theirs" and not alien institutions to the mass of workers and peasants. The modern "Social-Democrats" of the Scheidemann or, what is almost the same thing, of the Martov type are repelled by the Soviets, and they are drawn towards the respectable bourgeois parliament, or to the Constituent Assembly, in the same way as Turgenev, sixty years ago, was drawn towards a moderate monarchist and noblemen's Constitution and was repelled by the peasant democracy of Dobrolyubov and Chernyshevsky.

It is the closeness of the Soviet to the "people", to the working people, that creates the special forms of recall and other means of control from below which must be most zealously developed now. For example, the Councils of Public Education, as periodical conferences of Soviet electors and their delegates called to discuss and control the activities of the Soviet authorities in this field, deserve full sympathy and support. Nothing could be sillier than to transform the Soviets into something congealed and self-contained. The more resolutely we now have to stand for a ruthlessly firm government, for the dictatorship of individuals in *definite processes of work*, in definite aspects of *purely executive* functions, the more varied must be the forms and methods of control from below in order to counteract every shadow of a possibility of distorting the principles of Soviet government, in order repeatedly and tirelessly to weed out bureaucracy.

### CONCLUSION

An extraordinarily difficult, complex and dangerous situation in international affairs; the necessity of manoeuvring and retreating; a period of waiting for new outbreaks of the revolution which is maturing in the West at a painfully slow pace; within the country a period of slow construction and ruthless "tightening up", of prolonged and persistent struggle waged by stern, proletarian discipline against the menacing element of petty-bourgeois laxity and anarchy—these in brief are the distinguishing features of the special stage of the socialist revolution in which we are now living. This is the link in the historical chain of events which we must at present grasp with all our might in order to prove equal to the tasks that confront us before passing to the next link to which we are drawn by a special brightness, the brightness of the victories of the international proletarian revolution.

Try to compare with the ordinary everyday concept "revolutionary" the slogans that follow from the specific conditions of the present stage, namely, manoeuvre, retreat, wait, build slowly, ruthlessly tighten up, rigorously discipline, smash laxity.... Is it surprising that when certain "revolutionaries" hear this they are seized with noble indignation and begin to "thunder" abuse at us for forgetting the traditions of the October Revolution, for compromising with the bourgeois experts, for compromising with the bourgeoisie, for being petty bourgeois, reformists, and so on and so forth?

The misfortune of these sorry "revolutionaries" is that even those of them who are prompted by the best motives in the world and are absolutely loyal to the cause of socialism fail to understand the particular, and particularly "unpleasant", condition that a backward country, which has been lacerated by a reactionary and disastrous war and which began the socialist revolution long before the more advanced countries, inevitably has to pass through; they lack stamina in the difficult moments of a difficult transition. Naturally, it is the "Left Socialist-Revolutionaries" who are acting as an "official" opposition of *this* kind against our Party. Of course, there are and always will be individual exceptions from group and class

types. But social types remain. In the land in which the small-proprietor population greatly predominates over the purely proletarian population, the difference between the proletarian revolutionary and petty-bourgeois revolutionary will inevitably make itself felt, and from time to time will make itself felt very sharply. The petty-bourgeois revolutionary wavers and vacillates at every turn of events; he is an ardent revolutionary in March 1917 and praises "coalition" in May, hates the Bolsheviks (or laments over their "adventurism") in July and apprehensively turns away from them at the end of October, supports them in December, and, finally, in March and April 1918 such types, more often than not, turn up their noses contemptuously and say: "I am not one of those who sing hymns to 'organic' work, to practicalness and gradualism."

The social origin of such types is the small proprietor, who has been driven to frenzy by the horrors of war, by sudden ruin, by unprecedented torments of famine and devastation, who hysterically rushes about seeking a way out, seeking salvation, places his confidence in the proletariat and supports it one moment and the next gives way to fits of despair. We must clearly understand and firmly remember the fact that socialism cannot be built on such a social basis. The only class that can lead the working and exploited people is the class that unswervingly follows its path without losing courage and without giving way to despair even at the most difficult, arduous and dangerous stages. Hysterical impulses are of no use to us. What we need is the steady advance of the iron battalions of the proletariat.

Lenin, Vol. 27, pp. 235-278.



#### GERMAN INTERVENTION IN THE UKRAINE AND SKOROPADSKY'S ASSUMPTION OF POWER

April 29, 1918

*1918-1919 was an extremely chaotic period in the Ukraine, with one government following quickly after another, and rarely exercising effective authority over large areas. The Ukrainian Central Rada which had proclaimed an independent Ukraine (see January 9, above) was soon ousted by a communist government which had been formed in Kharkov, and the latter in turn was soon ousted by German troops which then propped up the regime of Pavlo Skoropadsky. After the Peace of Brest-Litovsk the Germans played a major role in the political, military and economic life of the Ukraine and all of the western part of the former Russian empire, until their own defeat by the Allies in November 1918. These two documents illustrate the German involvement and the ambitions of the Skoropadsky government. The first is a newspaper account of German soldiers dispersing the Rada, the Ukrainian government, and the second is Skoropadsky's declaration of assumption of power. After the German withdrawal the Skoropadsky regime fell, and until 1920 the area was ravaged by warfare, guerilla activities, and political instability.*

#### I. GERMAN DISPERSAL OF THE UKRAINIAN RADA

At 3:45, when Rafe was speaking, there was heard on the staircase leading to the meeting hall the tramp of soldiers' boots.

The door beyond the Presidential table suddenly burst wide open and revealed a German lieutenant with a posse of German soldiers in helmets and armed with rifles, bayonets and revolvers.

"In the name of the German Government," loudly cried the lieutenant in Russian, "Hands up! Hands up! Don't move!"

There was great excitement in the hall. Everyone jumped up from his seat.

Through the open door armed soldiers continued to pour, filling all the space beyond the Presidential table.

"Hands up! hands up!" continued the lieutenant, who was joined by some more German officers, some of whom spoke Russian.

The members of the Rada, the representatives of the Press, and the public—all humbly raised their hands.

Also with uplifted hands stood Shelukhin, the Minister of Justice, and Klimovitch, Minister of Finance, and Prokopovitch, Minister of Education, and Shtefan, Assistant Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, and Gaevsky, Director of the Administrative and Political Department of the Ministry of the Interior, and others. Alone the President of the Rada, M.S. Hrushevsky, did not raise his hands, but instead calmly sat in his place. Only purple patches all over his face betrayed inward excitement.

The soldiers who had entered scattered over the hall, directing revolvers at all present, who, with uplifted hands, seemed frozen in their places. Revolvers were directed also at Prof. M.S. Hrushevsky.

"I make an emphatic protest against the introduction of soldiers into the Rada's building," said Prof. M.S. Hrushevsky in Ukrainian.

"Who are you?" cried the lieutenant, interrupting him.

"I am Hrushevsky, the President of the Central Rada."

"Ah! Hrushevsky," said the lieutenant. "But now I alone can speak here."

Excitement continued in the hall. In the back rows among the public, to which the soldiers penetrated, was audible the clank of arms, and noise and ill-defined cries.

"Water! Give us water!" was heard from there.

"Mikhail Sergeevitch! Call the public to order," said M.S. Balabanov, a member of the Rada, turning to M.S. Hrushevsky.

M.S. Hrushevsky rose and said: "Comrades! Please preserve order."

The lieutenant who commanded the detachment began summoning people in a loud voice:—

"Where is Zhukovsky, Minister of War? Where is Tkachenko, Minister of the Interior? Where is Minister Kovalsky? Where is Gaevsky, Director of the Administrative and Political Department?"

Silence!

The commander of the detachment again began to summon the names mentioned.

After the arrest of Gaevsky an indiscriminate search of the deputies and the public began. A list was made of the deputies. Afterwards the lieutenant requested the public to leave the meeting hall.

## II. SKOROPADSKY'S PROCLAMATION

Citizens of Ukraine! Within the memory of all are the circumstances of recent days, when the blood of the best sons of Ukraine flowed in streams and the newly revived Ukrainian Power stood on the verge of ruin.

For her salvation she is obliged to the powerful support of the Central Powers, who, true to their word, continue even at the present time to struggle for the unity and peace of Ukraine.

With such support at hand there sprang up hope in all that the re-establishment of order in the country was beginning, and that the economic life of Ukraine would at length run in the normal channel.

But these hopes were not justified. The former Ukrainian Government proved completely bankrupt. Disorders and anarchy in the country continue. Economic disintegration and unemployment are increasing every day, and, finally, there stands forth the threatening prospect of starvation for the Ukraine, which was once very rich.

With such circumstances threatening the Ukraine with a new catastrophe, all the working strata of the population were greatly perturbed, and broke forth with an emphatic demand that such governmental authority should at once be established as would be capable of guaranteeing to the population order, legality and the possibility of productive labour. As a true son of Ukraine I decided to respond to this call, and take authority upon myself in all its fullness for the time being.

By these presents I proclaim myself Hetman of Ukraine.

The administration of the country will be in the hands of a Cabinet of Ministers, appointed by myself, and conducted on the exact principles of the laws, herewith appended, respecting the provisional structure of the Ukrainian Power.

The Central and Little Radas, and also all Land Committees are from to-day dissolved. The Ministers and Assistant Ministers are dismissed. All other officials in governmental institutions remain at their places and must continue to fulfil their duties.

A new law will be issued very shortly establishing the order of elections to the Ukrainian Seim.

Until then I will stand firm, guarding order and legality in the country, will demand prompt fulfilment of all administrative regulations, and will support the authority of the powers that be without flinching before the most extreme measures.

The rights of private ownership, as the foundation of culture and civilisation, are restored to their full extent, and all dispositions of the late Ukrainain Government, as also of the Provisional Government, that have abrogated or restricted these rights are abrogated. Full freedom for the sale and purchase of land is restored.

Together with this, measures will be taken to alienate at their actual value lands of large proprietors, to share out plots of land to agriculturists who have but little of it.

In like manner the rights of the labouring class will be firmly safeguarded. Special attention will be given to the legal position and conditions of employment of railway servants, who, under exceptionally difficult conditions, have not ceased their responsible work for a single hour.

In economic and financial spheres full freedom of trade is restored, and a wide field is opened to private enterprise and initiative.

I foresee all the heavy burden of my impending labour, and pray God to give to me sufficient strength to carry out that which I deem to be my duty before the Ukraine, my mother country, in the present exceptional and critical time for her.

All personal considerations are far from me and foreign to me; my one aim and object is the benefit and welfare of the population and country.

Conscious of this, I call on all citizens of the Ukraine, without distinction of nationality or religion, to help me and my assistants in our complicated and responsible task.

PAVLO SKOROPADSKY  
Hetman of All Ukraine

Kiev, April 29, 1918.

*Daily Review of the Foreign Press*, July 19, 1918, pp. 180-181.

## MAY FIRST MANIFESTO

May 1, 1918

*May First was a traditional socialist holiday, and was to become one of the two major holidays (along with the anniversary of the October Revolution) of the new Soviet state. This first May Day manifesto contained the appeals to international socialist unity which became a feature of May Day. In the last part, which focuses almost entirely on Russian issues, it also, inadvertently, points toward the latter use of socialist internationalism for the interests of the Soviet state.*

TO ALL, TO ALL WORKING MASSES OF ALL COUNTRIES, TO ALL SOVIETS, AND TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

On the day of the First of May, on the day of the International Working Class Festival, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and Cossacks' Deputies sends fraternal greetings to all comrades, workers and poor peasants of all countries, to all champions of the freedom of the working masses.

This is the first opportunity, after the agreement at the International [Socialist] Congress of 1889 in Paris that the First of May would be a proletarian festival, that the proletariat has seen the participation in its festival of a government. All political power in Russia is in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest classes of the towns and villages, which are united in their soviets. After years and years of difficult struggle, after tens and hundreds of thousands of lives have been sacrificed, the working classes have obtained power. At the present time they have power only in Russia.

On the First of May each year the international proletariat has measured its forces country by country and reviewed its battalions, and those forces have been seen to have increased and the working classes have become more conscious of their power. Year after year the working classes have renewed their claims; year after year the proletariat has demonstrated its international solidarity and called on the working classes to unite themselves into a powerful army for the deposition of capital.

The imperialists have succeeded in disturbing the unity of the proletariat by a war which was begun in capitalist interests. Months of war passed, and then they became years, and the mutual extermination of the working classes of the different countries in the interests of the imperialists is still continuing. But the aroused masses are coming again to self-consciousness in all countries. Russia has set an example of the power of the working classes. She will be followed by other countries. The victory of the working classes in Russia is inspiring the workers of all countries to a decisive struggle. All over the world the working classes are preparing themselves for the final effort. If the revolt against the oppressors has not till now occurred, we know very well that it must come and that the victory of the working classes is certain. If the international Communist revolution has grown slowly, we know very well that it will soon be ripe for the harvest. If up to the present only the working classes of Russia have secured victory, we know that in the whole world there is no power which can stop the victorious advance of the working masses. Our example will create enthusiasm, the will for effort and the determination to win victory over their enemies in the hearts of all the workmen of the world.

On the First of May, we the citizens of the Soviet Socialist Republic must address our first words to our brothers of other countries. We all are encircled by imperialist aggressors. Our struggle is difficult. We are losing blood in streams. Our brothers, the workers in all lands, must help us. We have taken upon our young and untried shoulders a heavy burden. They must share it with us. On the First of May we recall the international solidarity of all working classes. We recall our old battle cry: proletarians of all countries, unite. We have made our State flag the flag of the workers of the whole world—we have chosen the red

flag. Under our flag the proletariat of all countries will gather. We call under our flag all the oppressed, all those to whom the interests of the working classes are dear. On the day of the First of May, the working classes, year after year, have been called to a struggle against militarism. On all flags in all countries was written the phrase "Down with militarism." We, together with the workers of all countries, have declared war upon war. We, the working masses of the Russian Soviet Republic, now call for the complete destruction of militarism.

Up to the present time the domination of the bourgeoisie has not been broken in other countries; this domination is hated by us who have crushed the yoke of capitalism. We are threatened by capitalist encroachment from all sides. We are threatened by destruction. The socialist fatherland is in danger. To all those who hold the interests of working men dear, all those who have faith in the victory of labor upon earth, all those who have a heart, all these must come under our banners. We must create our own powerful army, the Red Army. Our struggle is also a struggle for the comrades who have fallen in this war. Millions of those still suffering under the yoke of capitalism in other countries call to us for more energetic work. We must create our Red fighting army, and we will create it. Let everyone join the ranks and take up a rifle and we will break the bourgeoisie. But we have to reconstruct the whole of our national life thoroughly. All our forces must be devoted to creative work for the organization of this new national life. Only by organized and fraternal labor shall we assure our victory. After having defeated the capitalists we must also defeat and overcome our own lack of organization. We firmly believe that the workers, with an iron hand, will establish an order of labor and revolutionary discipline. Set your hands to the task you creators of the new life. A great task is before Soviet power. We must fulfill it, and we will. May this call reach all workers in all countries on the First of May. Unite! Enter into the final decisive struggle. The defence of the Soviet Republic, with weapons in your hands, is the sacred duty of every worker, both in town and in the village. All join the Red Army. Long live Soviet power.

The All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the  
All-Russian Soviet of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and Cossacks' Deputies.

*Daily Review of the Foreign Press*, May 3, 1918, p. 23, with modifications by the editor.



## DECREE ON FOOD PROCUREMENT

May 13, 1918

*Food procurement, a problem well before the revolution, became critical in 1918. Problems of adequate food for the cities and the army, coupled with Bolshevik ideological hostility to private trade and to the more prosperous peasants, led to various schemes of food procurement and requisitions in early 1918. In May the People's Commissariat of Food Procurement (Narkomprod) was given extraordinary powers as a virtual food dictatorship. The decree, which assumed that wealthy peasants were hoarding large amounts of grain, inaugurated a period of intense grain requisitions and tighter control over distribution of consumer goods in general.*

## DECREE OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A ruinous process of disintegration of the food procurement of the country—the heavy legacy of a four-year war—continues to extend and aggravate the existing distress.

While the consuming provinces are starving, great stocks of cereals, including the 1916 harvest and the 1917 harvest which has not yet been threshed, lie, as habitually, in the



producing provinces. These stocks are in the hands of rural kulaks and wealthy people, in the hands of the rural bourgeoisie. Replete and satisfied, having accumulated an enormous mass of money earned in the years of war, this rural bourgeoisie remains deaf and unresponsive in the face of the moanings of starving workers and poor peasants; it refuses to dispatch cereals to the state station points with the aim of forcing the state to increase again and again the price of cereals, while at the same time it sells for its own benefit cereals in the provinces of fabulous prices to speculators and bagmen.

The obstinacy of the greedy kulaks and wealthy peasants must be brought to an end. The food procurement experience of the last years has shown that the failure to apply fixed prices on cereals and a grain monopoly facilitates the feeding of a small group of our capitalists by making food inaccessible to several millions of toiling people and exposing them to the inevitability of death by starvation.

The reply to the violence of grain holders upon the rural poor must be violence upon the bourgeoisie.

Not one single pud of grain must remain in the hands of the grain holders, except the quantity needed for sowing and subsistence of the household until the next harvest.

And it is necessary to implement all this immediately, especially after the occupation of the Ukraine by the Germans, as we must content ourselves with the resources of cereals which are barely sufficient for sowing and survival.

Taking into account this situation and considering that only by rigorous accounting and even distribution of all grain stocks of Russia is it possible to get out of the food provision crisis, the All-Russian Executive Central Committee has decreed:

(1) By keeping firmly the grain monopoly and fixed prices and also carrying out a merciless struggle against grain speculators and bagmen, to compel each grain holder to declare the surrender of all surpluses, except the quantity needed for consumption on established norms until the next harvest, in one week after the notification of this decree in each *volost*. The rules applying to the orders [of delivery] will be defined by the local food procurement organs of *Narkomprod*.

(2) To invite all toiling people and propertyless peasants to unite immediately in a merciless struggle against the kulaks.

(3) To declare enemies of the nation all people having surpluses of grain and not handing them over to the station points and even dissipating the stocks of cereals for their own home brew instead of delivering them to the collecting stations; to bring them before the Revolutionary Courts, put them in jail for not less than ten years, confiscate all their belongings, banish them out of the *obshchina* and condemn the holders of home brew to forced labour in public works.

(4) In the case of discovery of any surplus of grain which had not been declared for delivery, according to point 1, grain will be requisitioned without payment, and half of the value which was due at fixed prices for the undeclared surplus will be paid to the people who took part in discovering the surpluses, after they have been in fact received in the collecting stations, and the other half to the Agricultural Community. Information about discovery of surpluses has to be reported to the local food procurement organs.

Considering also that the struggle against the food procurement crisis requires the adoption of rapid and decisive measures, that the most fruitful realization of such measures requires in turn the centralization of all decisions on food matters into a single institution, and that such an institution is the People's Commissariat of Food Procurement, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee has decreed—for the purpose of a more successful struggle against the food crisis—to attribute to the People's Commissar of Food Procurement the following powers:

(1) To issue obligatory decisions on food procurement matters, exceeding the normal limits of competence of the People's Commissar of Food Procurement.

(2) To abrogate instructions of local food procurement organs and institutions contradicting plans and activity of the People's Commissar of Food Procurement.

(3) To solicit from institutions and organizations of all departments the undiscussed and immediate fulfilment of the commissar's decisions on food procurement matters.

(4) To make use of armed troops in the case of resistance to requisition of grain and other foodstuffs.

(5) To dismiss or reorganize the food procurement organs in the localities if they oppose the People's Commissariat of Food Procurement's decisions.

(6) To discharge, dismiss, take before the Revolutionary Court, and submit to arrest appointees and employees of all departments and social organizations, if they interfere in a disruptive way with the commissariat's decisions.

(7) To transfer the present powers, except the right to arrest of point 6, to other people and institutions in the localities upon authorization of the People's Commissariat of Food Procurement.

(8) All measures of the People's Commissars of Food Procurement related by their nature to the People's Commissariat of Transport and to VSNKh are implemented upon agreement with the corresponding departments.

(9) All instructions and decisions of the People's Commissariat of Food Procurement, issued on account of the present powers, are examined by its collegium which has the right—without interrupting their execution—to appeal against them before the Soviet of People's Commissars.

(10) The present decree comes into life from the day of its signing and will be notified by telegraph.

Malle, pp. 359-361.



## LENIN ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

May 14, 1918

*Perhaps the best statement of the fundamental premises of early Soviet foreign policy and Communist view of international relations is found in this speech by Lenin. Although firmly grounded in contemporary concerns of Soviet foreign relations, Lenin's speech went beyond those to broader, more permanent, principles and assumptions. He argued that on the one hand capitalism and imperialism (i.e., the major Western states) must ceaselessly try to overthrow the revolution and the Soviet state which embodied it, but on the other hand their own rivalries precluded full cooperation toward that end. These two themes, sometimes together, sometimes alternating, would characterize future Soviet pronouncements on foreign policy, as would the obvious lesson—the need to try to prevent unified Western action against the Soviet state. This was delivered as a speech to a joint meeting of the Central Executive Committee and the Moscow Soviet.*

Comrades, permit me to acquaint you with the present foreign policy situation. In the past few days our international position has in many respects become more complicated owing to the aggravation of the general situation. Because of this aggravation, the provocation, the deliberate panic-spreading by the bourgeois press and its echo, the socialist press, is again doing its dark and filthy work of repeating the Kornilov affair.

First, I shall draw your attention to the factors determining, in the main, the international position of the Soviet Republic in order to proceed to the outward legal forms determining this position, and, on the basis of this, describe again the difficulties which have arisen or, to be more precise, define the turning-point at which we have arrived and which forms the basis of the worsened political situation.

Comrades, you know, and your knowledge has been particularly reinforced by the experience of the two Russian revolutions, that economic interests and the economic position of the classes which rule our state lie at the root of both our home and foreign policy. These propositions which constitute the basis of the Marxist world outlook and have been confirmed for us Russian revolutionaries by the great experience of both Russian revolutions, must not be forgotten even for a moment if we are to avoid losing ourselves in the thickets, the labyrinth of diplomatic tricks, a labyrinth which at times is artificially created and made more intricate by people, classes, parties and groups who like to fish in muddy waters, or who are compelled to do so.

We recently experienced, and to a certain extent are experiencing now, a situation in which our counter-revolutionaries—the Constitutional-Democrats and their foremost yes-men, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks—have been attempting to take advantage of the increased complexity of the international situation.

Basically, the position is that the Russian Socialist Soviet Republic, due to economic and political causes which we have described in the press on more than one occasion, and of which you are aware, due to a different rate of development, a basis of development different from that of the West, still remains a lone island in the stormy sea of imperialist robbery. The main economic factor in the West is that this imperialist war which has tortured and exhausted mankind has given rise to such complicated, such acute, such involved conflicts that again and again, at every step, the question of war and peace, the solution of the question to the advantage of one or other grouping, hangs by a thread. We have lived through precisely such a situation in the past few days. The contradictions that have arisen out of the frenzied struggle between the imperialist powers drawn into a war which is the result of the economic conditions of the development of capitalism over a number of decades, have made it impossible for the imperialists themselves to stop this war.

Owing to these contradictions, it has come about that the general alliance of the imperialists of all countries, forming the basis of the economic alliance of capitalism, an alliance whose natural and inevitable aim is to defend capital, which recognises no fatherland, and which has proved in the course of many major and important episodes in world history that capital places the safeguarding of the alliance of the capitalists of all countries against the working people above the interests of the fatherland, of the people or of what you will—that this alliance is not the moving force of politics.

Of course, as before, this alliance remains the main economic trend of the capitalist system, a trend which must ultimately make itself felt with inevitable force. That the imperialist war has divided into hostile groups, into hostile coalitions the imperialist powers which at the present moment, one may say, have divided up the whole world among themselves, is an exception to this main tendency of capitalism. This enmity, this struggle, this death grapple, proves that in certain circumstances the alliance of world imperialism is impossible. We are witnessing a situation in which the stormy waves of imperialist reaction, of the imperialist slaughter of nations, are hurling themselves at the small island of the socialist Soviet Republic, and seem about to sink it any minute, while actually these waves are only breaking against each other.

The basic contradictions between the imperialist powers have led to such a merciless struggle that, while recognising its hopelessness, neither the one, nor the other group is in a position to extricate itself at will from the iron grip of this war. The war has brought out two main contradictions, which in their turn have determined the socialist Soviet Republic's present international position. The first is the battle being waged on the Western front between

Germany and Britain, which has reached an extreme degree of ferocity. We have heard on more than one occasion representatives of the two belligerent groups promise and assure their own people and other peoples that all that is required is one more last effort for the enemy to be subdued, the fatherland defended and the interests of civilisation and of the war of liberation saved for all time. The longer this terrible struggle drags on and the deeper the belligerent countries become involved, the further off is the way out of this interminable war. And it is the violence of this conflict that makes extremely difficult, well-nigh impossible, an alliance of the great imperialist powers against the Soviet Republic, which in the bare half-year of its existence has won the warm regard and the most whole-hearted sympathy of the class-conscious workers of the world.

The second contradiction determining Russia's international position is the rivalry between Japan and America. Over several decades the economic development of these countries has produced a vast amount of inflammable material which makes inevitable a desperate clash between them for domination of the Pacific Ocean and the surrounding territories. The entire diplomatic and economic history of the Far East leaves no room for doubt that under capitalist conditions it is impossible to avert the imminent conflict between Japan and America. This contradiction, temporarily concealed by the alliance of Japan and America against Germany, delays Japanese imperialism's attack on Russia, which was prepared for over a long period, which was a long time feeling its way, and which to a certain degree was started and is being supported by counter-revolutionary forces. The campaign which has been launched against the Soviet Republic (the landing at Vladivostok and the support of the Semyonov bands) is being held up because it threatens to turn the hidden conflict between Japan and America into open war. It is quite likely, of course, and we must not forget that no matter how solid the imperialist groupings may appear to be, they can be broken up in a few days if the interests of sacred private property, the sacred rights of concessions, etc., demand it. It may well be that the tiniest spark will suffice to blow up the existing alignment of powers, and then the afore-mentioned contradictions will no longer protect us.

At the moment, however, the situation we have described explains why it is possible to preserve our socialist island in the middle of stormy seas and also why its position is so unstable, and, at times, to the great joy of the bourgeoisie and the panic of the petty bourgeoisie, it seems that it may be engulfed by the waves at any minute.

The outer aspect, the external expression of this situation is the Brest Treaty on the one hand, and the customs and laws with regard to neutral countries on the other.

You know that treaties and laws are worth nothing but a scrap of paper in the face of international conflicts.

These words are usually recalled and quoted as an example of the cynicism of imperialist foreign policy; the cynicism, however, lies not in these words, but in the ruthless, the cruelly and agonisingly ruthless, imperialist war, in which all peace treaties and all laws of neutrality have been flouted, are flouted, and will be flouted, as long as capitalism exists.

That is why, when we come to the most important question for us, the Brest peace and the likelihood of its violation with all the possible consequences for us—if we want to stand firmly on our socialist feet and do not want to be overthrown by the plots and provocations of the counter-revolutionaries, no matter under what socialist labels they disguise themselves, we must not forget for a single moment the economic principles underlying all peace treaties, including that of Brest-Litovsk, the economic principles underlying all neutrality, including our own. We must not forget, on the one hand, the state of affairs internationally, the state of affairs of international imperialism in relation to the class which is growing, and which sooner or later, perhaps even later than we desire or expect, will nevertheless become capitalism's heir and will defeat world capitalism. And on the other hand, we must not forget the relations between the imperialist countries, the relations between the imperialist economic groups.

Having clarified this situation, I think, comrades, we shall not find it difficult to understand the significance of those diplomatic particulars and details, at times even trifles, which have mainly occupied our attention during the past few days, which have been on our minds during the past few days. Clearly, the instability of the international situation gives rise to panic. This panic emanates from the Constitutional-Democrats, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who aid and abet the interests of those who want and who strive to sow panic. In no way closing our eyes to the full danger and tragedy of the situation, and analysing the economic relations on an international scale, we must say: yes, the question of war and peace hangs by a thread both in the West and in the Far East because two trends exist; one, which makes an alliance of all the imperialists inevitable; the other, which places the imperialists in opposition to each other—two trends, neither of which has any firm foundation. No, Japan cannot now decide to launch a full-scale attack, although with her million-strong army she could quite easily overrun obviously weak Russia. I do not know, nor can anyone know, when this is likely to take place.

The form of the ultimatum threatens war against the allies and a treaty with Germany, but this position can change in a few days. There is always the possibility of it changing, because the American bourgeoisie, now at loggerheads with Japan, can tomorrow come to terms with her, because the Japanese bourgeoisie are just as likely tomorrow to come to terms with the German bourgeoisie. Their basic interests are the same: the division of the world between themselves, the interests of the landowners, of capital, the safeguarding (as they say) of their national self-respect and their national interests. This language is sufficiently familiar to those who have either the misfortune or the habit—I don't know which—of reading newspapers like those of the Socialist-Revolutionaries. And when national self-respect begins to be mentioned frequently we all know, we know very well from the experience of 1914, what facts of imperialist robbery this is prompted by. In view of this relationship it is clear why the situation in the Far East is unstable. One thing must be said: we must have a clear understanding of these contradictions of capitalist interests, we must appreciate that the stability of the Soviet Republic is growing with every week, every month that passes, and that sympathy towards it among the working and exploited people of the world is growing at the same time.

And, at the same time, any day, any moment we must be prepared for and expect changes in international politics in favour of the policies of the extremist war parties.

The position of the German coalition is clear to us. At the present moment the majority of the German bourgeois parties stand for observing the Brest peace, but, of course, are very glad to "improve" on it and to receive a few more annexations at Russia's expense. What makes them take this stand? The political and military considerations of German national interests—as they express it—of imperialist interests, make them prefer peace in the East, so that their hands may be free in the West, where German imperialism has promised an immediate victory on many occasions, and where every week or every month proves that this victory, the more the partial successes gained, recedes still further into the distance. On the other hand, there is a war party which, during discussions on the Brest Treaty, showed its hand on a number of occasions, a party which naturally exists in all imperialist countries, a war party which says to itself: force must be used immediately, irrespective of possible consequences. These are the voices of the extremist war party. It has been known in German history since the time when overwhelming military victories became a feature history. It has been known since 1866, for instance, when the extremist war party of Germany achieved victory over Austria and turned this victory into a complete rout. All these clashes, all these conflicts are inevitable and lead to a situation where matters now hang by a thread, where, on the one hand, the bourgeois imperialist majority of the German parliament, the German propertied classes, the German capitalists prefer to stand by the Brest Treaty, while having, I repeat, no hesitation about improving on it. And on the other hand, any day, any moment

we must be prepared for and expect changes in politics in the interests of the extremist war party.

This explains the instability of the international situation; this explains how easy it is in the circumstances to put the Party in one situation or another; this shows what prudence, caution, self-control and presence of mind is demanded of the Soviet government if it is to define its task clearly. Let the Russian bourgeoisie rush from a French to a German orientation. They like doing this. They have in several areas seen that German support is an excellent guarantee against the peasants who are taking the land, and against the workers who are building the foundations of socialism. In the quite recent past, and over a long period, over a number of years they branded as traitors those who condemned the imperialist war and opened people's eyes to its real nature, but now they are all prepared in a few weeks to change their political beliefs and to go over from an alliance with the British robbers to an alliance with the German robbers against Soviet power. Let the bourgeoisie of all shades, from the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, rush this way and that. It suits their nature. Let them spread panic, for they are themselves in a panic. Let them rush to and fro, unable to do otherwise, vacillating between the different orientations and between the absurd phrases that fail to take into consideration the fact that to deepen the effect of the revolution, when it has attained great proportions, one has to experience the most diverse groupings and transitions from one stage to another. We Russian revolutionaries have had the good fortune in the twentieth century to pass through two revolutions, each of which gave us a lot of experience, which has also stamped its impression on the lives of the people, of how a deep-going and effective revolutionary movement is prepared; how the different classes in this movement behave; by what difficult and exhausting path, sometimes by a long evolution, the maturity of new classes comes about.

Remember how hard it was for the Soviets, created by the spontaneous outburst in 1905, how hard it was for them in 1917 to take up the fight again, and how hard later, when they had to go through all the suffering of compromise with the bourgeoisie and with the hidden, most rabid enemies of the working class, who talked of the defence of the revolution, of the Red Flag, and committed the greatest of crimes in June 1917—now, when the majority of the working class supports us, remember what it cost after the great 1905 Revolution to emerge with Soviets of the working and peasant classes. Remember all this, and think of the mass scale on which the struggle against international imperialism is developing, think how difficult the transition to this situation is, and what the Russian Republic had to undergo when it found itself ahead of all the other contingents of the socialist army.

I know that there are, of course, wiseacres with a high opinion of themselves and even calling themselves socialists, who assert that power should not have been taken until the revolution broke out in all countries. They do not realise that in saying this they are deserting the revolution and going over to the side of the bourgeoisie. To wait until the working classes carry out a revolution on an international scale means that everyone will remain suspended in mid-air. This is senseless. Everyone knows the difficulties of a revolution. It may begin with brilliant success in one country and then go through agonising periods, since final victory is only possible on a world scale, and only by the joint efforts of the workers of all countries. Our task consists in being restrained and prudent, we must manoeuvre and retreat until we receive reinforcements. A changeover to these tactics is inevitable, no matter how much they are mocked by so-called revolutionaries with no idea of what revolution means.

Having dealt with the general questions I now want to examine the causes of the recent alarm and panic which have again enabled the counter-revolutionaries to start activities intended to undermine Soviet power.

I have already mentioned that the outward legal form and outer aspect of all international relations of the Soviet Socialist Republic are, on the one hand, the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, and, on the other, the general law and custom defining the status of a neutral country among other,

belligerent countries; this status accounts for the recent difficulties. The conclusion of peace with Finland, the Ukraine and Turkey should have been the natural consequence of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, yet we are still at war with these countries, and this is not due to our internal development, but to the influence of the ruling classes of these countries. In these conditions the only temporary way out lay in the temporary breathing-space provided by the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, the breathing-space which provoked so many futile and unnecessary words about its being impossible but which nevertheless turned out to be possible and in two months brought results, made itself felt on the majority of Russian soldiers, enabled them to return home and see how things were going, to take advantage of the revolution's gains, to work the land, to look around and draw new strength for the fresh sacrifices ahead.

Naturally, this temporary breathing-space appeared to be coming to an end when the situation worsened in Finland, the Ukraine and Turkey, when, instead of peace, we merely obtained a postponement of that selfsame acute economic problem: war or peace? And now are we to go to war once again, despite all the peaceful intentions of Soviet power and its absolute determination to sacrifice so-called Great Power status, i.e., the right to conclude secret treaties, to conceal them from the people with the assistance of the Chernovs, Tseretelis and Kerenskys, to sign secret predatory treaties and conduct an imperialist, predatory war? Indeed, instead of peace, all that we have obtained is a brief postponement of that selfsame pressing question of war or peace.

Here is the result of this situation, and you again clearly see where its final outcome lies—namely, in the question of what the results will be of the wavering among the two hostile groups of imperialist countries—the American conflict in the Far East, and the German-British conflict in Western Europe. It is clear how these contradictions have intensified over the conquest of the Ukraine, over the situation which the German imperialists, particularly their main war party, frequently viewed so optimistically, looked upon as so easy, and which caused precisely this extremist German war party such fantastic difficulties. It was this situation which temporarily raised the hopes of the Russian Constitutional-Democrats, Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, who have fallen in love with what Skoropadsky is bringing the Ukraine, and who now hope that this will also be easily achieved in Russia. These gentlemen will be mistaken; their hopes will turn to dust because...(*stormy applause*), because, I say, that same main war party in Germany, which is too accustomed to rely on the power of the sword, even this party in these particular circumstances has not been supported by the majority of the imperialists, those bourgeois imperialist circles who have seen unprecedented difficulties in the conquest of the Ukraine, in the struggle to subjugate a whole people, in the forced necessity of resorting to a terrible coup d'état.

This main war party created unprecedented difficulties in Germany when, having promised its people and the workers supreme victories on the Western Front, this extremist war party was forced to recognise that it was faced with new, unbelievable economic and political difficulties, with having to divert military forces to tasks which also at first seemed easy, and also with having to conclude a treaty with the Ukrainian Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were the signatories to the peace treaty.

The extremist war party in Germany reasoned: we shall send many troops and obtain grain, but then it became necessary to engineer a coup d'état. That turned out to be easy, because the Ukrainian Mensheviks readily supported this move. But it then turned out that this coup d'état created fresh and gigantic difficulties, because the grain and raw materials, without which Germany cannot exist, had to be fought for at every step, and their appropriation by military force in an occupied country involved too great an effort and too many sacrifices.

Such is the situation that has arisen in the Ukraine and that should have lent wings to the hopes of the Russian counter-revolution. It is clear that in this struggle, Russia, which has been unable to rebuild her army, has suffered and is suffering further losses. The peace talks have led to new, onerous conditions, to new open and concealed indemnities. Under

what decree the Ukraine's frontiers are to be determined is not clear. The Rada, which signed the decree, has been removed. A landowner-hetman has been put in its place. Because of this uncertainty a whole number of problems have emerged which prove that the questions of war and peace remain as before. The partial armistice existing between the Russian and German troops in no way predetermines the general situation. The question hangs in the air. The same is true of Georgia, where we have a protracted counter-revolutionary struggle by the government of the Caucasian Mensheviks, a protracted struggle by counter-revolutionaries who call themselves Social-Democrats. And when the victory of Soviet power and the working people, having embraced the whole of Russia, has begun to draw in the non-Russian outlying areas, when it has become quite obvious and beyond all doubt that the victory of Soviet power, as has been admitted by the counter-revolutionary representatives of the Don Cossacks, cannot be delayed, when the Menshevik government in the Caucasus has begun to waver—the government of Gegechkori and Jordania, who realised this too late and started to talk about finding a common language with the Bolsheviks when Tsereteli, aided by the Turkish troops, has shown his hand by advancing against the Bolsheviks—they will reap the same harvest as the Rada. (*Applause.*)

Remember, however, that if these bargainers of the Caucasian Rada receive the support of the German troops, as did the Ukrainian Rada, then there will no doubt be fresh difficulties for the Russian Soviet Republic, a new inevitability of war, new dangers and new uncertainties. There are people who refer to this uncertainty, to the strain of an uncertain situation (in fact such an uncertain situation is sometimes worse than any clearly defined one), and say that the uncertainty can be easily removed—you only have to demand openly that the Germans observe the Brest Treaty.

I have heard such naive people, who consider themselves to be on the left, but who in fact only reflect the narrow-mindedness of our petty bourgeoisie.

They forget that you have first to be victorious before you can make demands. If you are not victorious the enemy can delay his reply or even make no reply at all to your demands. That is the law of imperialist war.

You don't like it. Then be able to defend your homeland. The worker has every right to defend his homeland for the sake of socialism, for the sake of the working class.

I shall only add that this uncertain situation on the Caucasian border was a result of the quite unpardonable vacillation of the Gegechkori government which at first announced that it did not recognise the Brest peace, and then declared its independence without informing us of what territory this independence covered. We have sent innumerable radio-telegrams saying to them: please inform us of the territory you lay claim to. You have the right to claim independence, but since you speak of independence, you are bound to say what territory you are representing. That was a week ago. Countless radio-telegrams have been dispatched, but not a single reply has been received. German imperialism is taking advantage of this. This has made it possible for Germany, and Turkey, as a satellite state, to push farther and farther forward, making no replies, ignoring everything, stating: we shall take whatever we can, we are not infringing the Brest peace, because the Transcaucasian army does not recognise it, because the Caucasus is independent.

Of whom is the Gegechkori government independent? It is independent of the Soviet Republic, but it is dependent, just a little, on German imperialism, and quite naturally so. (*Applause.*)

That is the situation which has developed, comrades—an acute aggravation of relations in the last few days—it is a situation which has once again, and fairly obviously, confirmed the correctness of the tactics which the vast majority of our Party, the Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks, has employed and firmly insisted on during recent months.

We possess great revolutionary experience, which has taught us that it is essential to employ the tactics of merciless attack when objective conditions permit, when the experience of compromising has shown that the people's indignation has been aroused, and that attack



will express this change. But we have to resort to temporising tactics, to a slow gathering of forces when objective circumstances do not favour a call for a general merciless repulse.

Any person who does not shut his eyes to the facts, who is not blind, knows that we are merely repeating what we have said earlier, and what we have always said: that we do not forget the weakness of the Russian working class compared to other contingents of the international proletariat. It was not our own will, but historical circumstances, the legacy of the tsarist regime, the flabbiness of the Russian bourgeoisie, that caused this contingent to march ahead of the other contingents of the international proletariat; it was not because we desired it, but because circumstances demanded it. We must remain at our post until the arrival of our ally, the international proletariat, which will arrive and will inevitably arrive, but which is approaching at an immeasurably slower pace than we expect or wish. If we see that as a result of objective conditions the international proletariat moves too slowly, we must nevertheless stick to our tactics of temporising and utilising the conflicts and contradictions between the imperialists, of slowly accumulating strength; the tactics of preserving this island of Soviet power in the stormy imperialist sea, maintaining this island which now already attracts the gaze of the working people of all countries. That is why we tell ourselves that, if the extremist war party can at any moment defeat any imperialist coalition and build a new unexpected imperialist coalition against us, we at any rate will not make it any easier for them. And if they come against us—yes, we are now defencists—we shall do everything in our power, everything within the power of diplomatic tactics, we shall do everything to delay that moment, everything to make the brief and unstable respite, given us in March, last longer, for we are firmly convinced that behind us are tens of millions of workers and peasants who know that with every week and, even more so, with every month of this respite they gain new strength, they are consolidating Soviet power, making it firm and stable. They know that they are introducing a new spirit, and that after the attrition and weariness of this exhausting reactionary war, they will create firmness and readiness for the last and decisive battle should external forces attack the Socialist Soviet Republic.

We have been defencists since October 25, 1917; we have won the right to defend our native land. It is not secret treaties that we are defending, we have annulled and exposed them to the whole world. We are defending our country against the imperialists. We are defending and we shall win. It is not the Great Power status of Russia that we are defending—of that nothing is left but Russia proper—nor is it national interests, for we assert that the interests of socialism, of world socialism are higher than national interests, higher than the interests of the state. We are defenders of the socialist fatherland.

This is not achieved by issuing declarations, but only by overthrowing the bourgeoisie in one's own country, by a ruthless war to the death begun in one's own country; and we know that we shall win this war. Ours is a small island in the war that engulfs the imperialist world, but on this small island we have shown and proved to all what the working class can do. Everyone knows this and has acknowledged it. We have proved that we possess the right to defend our homeland. We are defencists and look upon our task with all the seriousness taught us by the four years of war, with all the seriousness and caution understood by every worker and peasant who has met a soldier and has learned what that soldier has lived through in these four years of war—the caution which may not be understood, which may be sneered at and regarded frivolously only by people who are revolutionaries in word but not in deed. It is just because we do support the defence of the fatherland that we tell ourselves: a firm and strong army and a strong rear are needed for the defence, and in order to have a firm and strong army we must in the first place ensure that the food supplies are on a sound basis. For this the dictatorship of the proletariat must be expressed not only centrally—that is the first step and only the first step—but there must be dictatorship throughout the whole of Russia—that is the second step and only the second step, which we have not yet carried out sufficiently. Proletarian discipline is essential and necessary for us; real proletarian

dictatorship, when the firm and iron rule of class-conscious workers is felt in every remote corner of our country, when not a single kulak, not a single rich man, not a single opponent of the grain monopoly remains unpunished, but is found and punished by the iron hand of the disciplined dictators of the working class, the proletarian dictators. (*Applause.*)

We say to ourselves: our attitude to defence of the fatherland is a cautious one; it is our duty to do everything that our diplomacy can do to delay the moment of war, to extend the respite period; we promise the workers and peasants to do all we can for peace. This we shall do. And bourgeois gentlemen and their hirelings, who think that just as in the Ukraine, where a coup was brought about so easily, so in Russia it may be possible to give birth to new Skoropadskys, should not forget that the war party in Germany found it very difficult to effect a coup in the Ukraine, and will meet with plenty of opposition in Soviet Russia. Everything goes to prove this; Soviet power has pursued this line and has made every sacrifice to consolidate the position of the working people.

The situation with regard to peace with Finland may be summed up in the words: Fort Ino and Murmansk. Fort Ino, which defends Petrograd, lies geographically within the Finnish state. In concluding peace with the workers' government of Finland we, the representatives of socialist Russia, recognised Finland's absolute right to the whole territory, but it was mutually agreed by both governments that Fort Ino should remain in Russia's hands "for the defence of the joint interests of the Socialist Republics", as stated in the treaty that was concluded. It is natural that our troops should conclude this peace in Finland, should sign these terms. It is natural that bourgeois and counter-revolutionary Finland was bound to raise a hue and cry against this. It is natural that the reactionary and counter-revolutionary Finnish bourgeoisie should lay claim to this stronghold. It is natural that, because of this, the issue should become acute on a number of occasions and should still remain acute. Matters hang by a thread. It is natural that the question of Murmansk, to which the Anglo-French have laid claim, should give rise to even greater aggravation, because they have spent tens of millions on the port's construction in order to safeguard their military rear in their imperialist war against Germany. Their respect for neutrality is so wonderful that they make use of everything that is left unguarded. Furthermore, sufficient excuse for their grabbing is their possession of a battleship, while we have nothing with which to chase it away. It is natural that all this should have aggravated the situation. There is an outer aspect, a legal expression resulting from the international position of the Soviet Republic, which presumes that it is impossible for armed forces of any belligerent state to set foot on neutral territory without being disarmed. The British landed their military forces at Murmansk, and we were unable to prevent this by armed force. Consequently, we are presented with demands almost in the nature of an ultimatum: if you cannot protect your neutrality, we shall wage war on your territory.

A worker-peasant army, however, has now been formed, it has rallied in the uyezds and gubernias the peasants who have returned to their land, land wrested from the landowners; they now have something to defend. An army has been formed which has started to build Soviet power, and which will become the vanguard if an invasion against Russia breaks out; we shall rise as one man to meet the enemy.

My time is up, and I want to conclude by reading a telegram received by radio from Comrade Joffe, Soviet Ambassador in Berlin. This telegram will show you that, on the one hand, you have confirmation from our Ambassador of whether my analysis of the international situation is correct and, on the other hand, that the foreign policy of our Soviet Republic is a responsible one—it is a policy of preparation for defence of our country, a steadfast policy, not allowing a single step to be taken that would aid the extremist parties of the imperialist powers in the East and West. This is a responsible policy with no illusions. There always remains the possibility that any day military forces may be thrown against us and we, the workers and peasants, assure ourselves and the whole world, and shall be able to

prove, that we shall rise to a man to defend the Soviet Republic. I hope, therefore, that the reading of this telegram will serve as an appropriate conclusion to my speech and will show us the spirit in which the representatives of the Soviet Republic work abroad in the interests of the Soviets, of all Soviet institutions and the Soviet Republic.

"The latest radio-telegrams received today report that the German War Prisoners' Commission is leaving on Friday, May 10. We have already received a Note from the German Government proposing the setting up of a special commission to consider all legal questions in regard to our possessions in the Ukraine and in Finland. I have agreed to such a commission and have asked you to send the appropriate military and legal representatives. Today I had a talk about further advances, demands for clearing Fort Ino, and the attitude of the Russians to Germany. Here is the reply: The German High Command states that there will be no further advances; Germany's role in the Ukraine and Finland has ended. Germany is willing to assist our peace talks with Kiev and Helsingfors and is entering into negotiations with the governments concerned. As regards Fort Ino, in connection with the Finnish peace talks: according to the treaty, the forts should be destroyed. Germany considers that when defining the frontiers the agreement with the Reds can be accepted; the Whites have not yet replied. The German Government declares officially: Germany abides firmly by the Brest Treaty, she wants peaceful relations with us, she has no aggressive plans and has no intention of attacking us in any way. It is promised that, in accordance with my request, Russian citizens in Germany will be treated on a par with other neutrals."

Lenin, Vol. 27, pp. 365-381.



### REVOLT OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK TROOPS

May 20-25, 1918

*The revolt of the Czechoslovak Legion was one of the key events of the early stage of the Civil War. Czech and Slovak prisoners of war in Russia had formed a Legion to fight on behalf of a free nation after the war. Numbering about 45,000 by the end of 1917, the Legion undertook to leave Russia for France, via Vladivostok, with Soviet cooperation at first. The long trek across Russia and Siberia was beset by conflicts with local soviets, with the Moscow authorities, and with German, Austrian and Hungarian prisoners encountered en route. Dismayed by conflicting Soviet policies (including stopping their movement on the railroads), some Czech commanders in April resolved to use force if necessary to complete their journey. Finally, a dispute between Czechoslovaks and Hungarians in Cheliabinsk led to conflict with local Soviet authorities. The Soviet government now moved to disarm and disband the Czechs, provoking resistance from the latter. This set the stage for the Czechoslovak Legion to seize effective control of large areas along the Trans-Siberian Railroad and play a role in the early anti-Bolshevik fighting in the east.*

### ORDER SENT BY ASSISTANT COMMISSAR OF WAR S.E. ARALOV TO DISBAND THE CZECHOSLOVAKS. MAY 20, 1918

By order the Chairman of the People's Commissariat of War, Comrade Trotsky, I order you to remove the Czechoslovaks from their trains, in order that they can be organized into labor

artels by specializations and enrolled into the ranks of the Soviet Red Army. Do everything you can to support the organization of Czechoslovak communists.

#### CZECH DECISION NOT TO SURRENDER ARMS. MAY 22, 1918

The Congress of the Czechoslovak Revolutionary Army, assembled at Cheliabinsk, declares in the presence of War Commissar Sadlutsky its feeling of sympathy with the Russian revolutionary people in their difficult struggle for the consolidation of the revolution. However, the Congress is convinced that the Soviet Government is powerless to guarantee our troops free and safe passage to Vladivostok and therefore has unanimously decided not to surrender its arms until it received assurance that the Corps will be allowed to depart and will be protected against counter-revolutionary trains.

#### DECISION TO RETAIN ARMS COMMUNICATED TO THE SOVNARKOM. MAY 23, 1918

The Congress of Representatives of the Czechoslovak Corps at Cheliabinsk has resolved to delegate exclusive charge of the transportation of Czechoslovak troops to the Provisional Executive Committee chosen by the Congress. Orders issued by representatives of any other Czechoslovak organization are invalid. With reference to the order to surrender arms, issued by the representative of the Czechoslovak National Council, Maxa, and War Commissar Aralov, the Congress has unanimously decided not to surrender arms before reaching Vladivostok, considering them a guarantee of safe travel. The assurances of safe transportation from the authorities of the Federal Soviet Republic cannot satisfy us.... The Congress protests against the repeated attempts to disarm and stop Czechoslovak echelons.... Although taking certain precautionary measures, the Czechoslovak Executive Committee entertains the hope that the Soviet Government will place no obstacles in the way of the departing Czechoslovak revolutionary troops....

Our hope for a peaceful settlement of this involved situation is the greater since every conflict would only prejudice the position of the local Soviet organs in Siberia.

Bohdan Pavlu

Chairman of the Czechoslovak Executive Committee

#### ORDERS TO DISARM THE CZECHOSLOVAKS. MAY 25, 1918

To all Sovdeps along the Penza-Omsk Railway Line:

All Soviets are hereby ordered to disarm the Czechoslovaks immediately. Every armed Czechoslovak found on the railway is to be shot on the spot; every troop train in which even one armed man is found shall be unloaded, and its soldiers shall be interned in a war prisoners' camp. Local war commissars must proceed at once to carry out this order; every delay will be considered treason and will bring the offender severe punishment. At the same time, reliable forces entrusted with teaching the rebels a lesson are being sent to the rear of the Czechoslovaks. Honest Czechoslovaks who surrender their arms and submit to the Soviet Government will be treated as brothers and given every assistance. Inform all railway workers that not a single car of armed Czechoslovaks is to be allowed to move eastward. Those who submit to violence and assist the Czechoslovaks in their movement east will be severely punished.

This order is to be read to all Czechoslovak units and to all railway workers in places where Czechoslovaks are found. War commissars will report on its execution.

L. Trotsky

People's Commissar of War

Papoushek, p. 52; Bunyan, *Intervention, Civil War and Communism*, pp. 89-91.

## DECLARATION OF AN INDEPENDENT GEORGIAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

May 26, 1918

*The Caucasus region, with its numerous nationality groups, suffered from ethnic antagonisms, foreign (especially Turkish) threats, and political and class conflicts. This made the area especially volatile during the civil war years. After attempts at a unified Transcaucasian government failed, the three larger nationalities—Armenians, Ajerbaijanis and Georgians—each established independent republics. Of the three, Georgia was the first to act and the most successful in establishing itself, but like the others (and in contrast to Finland and the Baltic states) was forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union after the Civil War.*

For many centuries Georgia existed as a free and independent state.

At the end of the eighteenth century, surrounded on all sides by enemies, Georgia voluntarily joined Russia on condition that Russia defend her from external enemies.

During the years of the great Russian Revolution, an order was established in Russia which made for the destruction of the military front and the abandonment of Transcaucasia by the Russian army.

Left to her own resources, Georgia, together with all Transcaucasia, took the management of her destinies into her own hands and created appropriate organs for that purpose; however, the pressure of outside forces brought about the disruption of the union which had held together the peoples of Transcaucasia, and caused the downfall of the new political entity.

The present situation of the Georgian people imperatively dictates the necessity of creating an independent political organization as a safeguard against hostile powers and a solid foundation for free development.

Accordingly, the National Council of Georgia, elected by the National Assembly of Georgia on November 22, 1917, now publicly proclaims:

1. Henceforth the people of Georgia are a sovereign people and Georgia is a legally independent state.

2. Independent Georgia is politically established as a Democratic Republic.

3. In the event of any international conflict Georgia will remain neutral.

4. The Georgian Democratic Republic endeavors to establish friendly relations with all members of the society of nations, particularly with neighboring peoples and states.

5. The Georgian Democratic Republic guarantees civil and political rights to all citizens within its boundaries without regard to nationality, creed, social position, or sex.

6. The Georgian Democratic Republic offers wide opportunities for free development to all peoples living within its territory.

7. Pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, the government of Georgia is headed by the National Council, augmented by representatives of national minorities, and by a Provisional Government, responsible to the National Council.

Bunyan, *Intervention, Civil War and Communism*, pp. 51-52, with modifications by the editor.

## TO ARMS AGAINST COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES

May 30, 1918

*By the end of May, 1918, the Bolsheviks were hard pressed by internal unrest, the emergence of organized armed opposition, foreign intervention, economic collapse, and the threat of severe food shortages (dealing with the latter was a major issue of the summer of 1918 — see documents for June 11, July 9, August 4, August 20). The following is typical of the kinds of appeals launched by the regime at times of crisis. This document was followed by a special appeal to the Don and Kuban Cossacks (see following document).*

Workers and peasants, honest working citizens of all Russia: most difficult days have arrived. In the towns and in many provinces of the exhausted country there is no more bread. The working population is alarmed for their future. The enemies of the people are using for their treacherous purposes this difficult situation, into which they themselves have driven the country. They are creating revolts and are preparing chains for the hands of workers and peasants, whose authority they are endeavouring to overthrow. Ex-generals, landowners, and bankers are again evidencing themselves. They hope that the people, in their despair, will permit them to assume authority in the country. They will take back the land, the banks, manufactures, and, again having their privileges, will re-establish the autocracy of the rich.

All counter-revolutionary forces are working with accelerated energy for destroying the means of feeding the people, disorganising transport, destroying production, and creating revolts among the Red Army. The partisans of Kornilov, the Cadets, Socialist Revolutionaries of the Right, the White Guards, and makers of sabotage have united themselves closely with foreign agents. Calumny, lies, provocation, bribery, conspiracy are their means of fighting. At Saratov, only a few days ago, a revolt was crushed in which the Socialist Revolutionaries of the Right, ex-officers, and hooligan bands led by them, attempted to overthrow Soviet authority. In the Urals, Dutov bands are raging. On the Don the banner of revolt has been raised by General Krasnov, who in October was taken prisoner by Petrograd workers when he and Kerensky advanced in force on Petrograd; afterwards he was released. Krasnov is attempting to separate the Don and Kuban from Russia, transforming these rich regions into a foreign colony, and robbing starving Russian workers and peasants of the Don and Kuban grain. In Siberia counter-revolutionary conspirators, helped by Russian officers, have thrown into revolt duped Czecho-Slovak soldiers. At Moscow a military conspiracy has been discovered, where Socialist Revolutionaries of the Right and Monarchist officers are acting together.

In these difficult days the Council of the People's Commissars thinks it necessary to take extraordinary measures for feeding the starving workers and peasants, and for crushing all enemies of the people who are rising against the Soviet Republic. The most important thing is to secure daily bread. It is incumbent upon us to take it from the hard hands of profiteers and hoarders. Not only land and workshops, but bread as well, must become common property. It is necessary to clear the railway lines of Krasnov bands and Slovak mutineers. It is necessary to secure the possibility of general peaceful work for the betterment of the country. The Central Executive Committee has already ordered the Moscow and Petrograd Soviet to mobilise ten thousand workers, supplying and arming them for a grain campaign against usurpers, hoarders, profiteers, and marauders. This order must be obeyed within a week. Every worker called to arms must do his duty unconditionally. Against the Krasnov traitors who are selling the Don and Kuban, an appeal to all working Cossacks has been issued. They will be supported by Red Guard detachments from Central Russia. We will give neither authority, land, nor bread to the enemies of the people. Moscow is declared in a state of siege. The enemies of the people, who, by their criminal policy during centuries, and by

their dishonest war, have reduced the country to extreme exhaustion, are now attempting to conquer the population by starvation, and to give over Russia to foreigners for the re-establishment of control by the landlords and bourgeois. Hunger and the counter-revolution are walking together, against which we must declare a merciless war.

Workers and Peasants, days and weeks of the greatest difficulties and of the severest sufferings are come. If we crush immediately the resistance of the rural bourgeoisie, if we, with weapons in our hand, secure for ourselves bread until the next harvest, then shall we be unconquerable, and the Socialist Republic will be established for ever. A final heroic effort is necessary. The enemies of the people have come too soon in the open; we shall cut off their criminal heads by the merciless sword of the Revolution. To arms against counter-revolutionary mutineers and conspirators! Bread for the starving children and mothers! Death for the enemies of the people! Workers and Peasants, you will not give our authority and land to the traitors, renegades, and usurpers! Into the last struggle for a definitive victory! Long live the Workers' and Peasants' Soviet Republic!

(Signed) V. Ulianov-Lenin,  
President of the Council of the People's Commissars  
L. Trotsky,  
People's Commissar for War and Navy  
Chicherin,  
Temporary People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs  
Stalin,  
People's Commissar

*Daily Review of the Foreign Press, Neutral Press Supplement, June 3, 1918, p. 261.*



### A BOLSHEVIK CALL FOR COSSACK SUPPORT

May 31, 1918

*The Cossacks were a special concern for the Bolsheviks, not only because of their military tradition and potential as a political and military base for the anti-Bolshevik forces, but because of the importance of their lands to agriculture and the grain trade. At this time, under Hetman Krasnov, they not only represented a military threat but also an economic one if the idea of an independent Cossack state matured. Undermining the traditional structures and discipline of the Cossacks was therefore a major concern, and ties in to the broader problems raised in the previous document.*

Comrades, Cossacks of the Don and Kuban,

A great danger is threatening us. The enemies of working Cossackdom have raised their heads. Past landlords and Tsarist generals are attempting to seize authority on the Don and the Kuban, and to hand over these blessed, fruitful regions to foreign usurpers. Ex-General Krasnov, who, in October, together with Kerensky, marched with their forces on Petrograd, is now parading as a representative of the Don region, and is negotiating with Skoropadsky, the oppressor of Ukrainian workers and peasants, and with the representatives of the German Empire. Do you know something of that, Cossacks of the Don? No. The traitors are acting behind the back of the working people. They are declaring in your name that you are willing

to separate yourselves from Russia and to become the slaves of landlords and capitalists like those of the Ukraine. With the purpose of winning back their privileges the landlords, generals, and traitors such as Krasnov are ready to sell to foreign landlords and capitalists your native Don land. After the Don, the Kuban will be treated like other parts of the Soviet Republic. We, the Council of the People's Commissars, declare that the Don region is an integral part of the Russian Soviet Federal Republic. Landlords and generals have no right to speak in the name of working Cossackdom, or to sell you lands, your grain, and your blood. Rise, Cossacks, like one man, and declare that you remain in fraternal union with the workmen and peasants of Russia. The Council of the People's Commissars declare that ex-General Krasnov is an enemy of the people and an outlaw. There is no place for him in the free land of working Cossackdom. Revenge must reach him! Death to traitors! Working Cossacks of the Don and of the Kuban, by order of the workers, peasants, and Cossacks of All-Russia, the Council of the People's Commissars direct you to rise without delay in defence of your country against the traitors and usurpers. We order Cossack deputies of the Don and of the Kuban to create a faithful and trustworthy army for the salvation of your land and the defence of your freedom. Every Cossack must obey the first call to arms. We shall give you the necessary arms and ammunition, and we shall send for your support fraternal troops. A great danger is threatening you, Cossacks of the Don and Kuban. Prove by your acts that you will be no slaves of the oppressors and usurpers!

To arms, Don!

To arms, Kuban!

Death to the enemies of the people! Doom to the traitors! Long live working Cossackdom! Long live the fraternal union of workers, peasants, and Cossacks! Long live the Russian Soviet Federal Republic!

ULIANOV-LENIN, President of the Council of the People's Commissars.

TROTSKY, People's Commissar for the Army and the Navy.

CHICHERIN, Temporary Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

I. STALIN, People's Commissar.

*Daily Review of the Foreign Press, Neutral Press Supplement, June 3, 1918, p. 261.*



## COMMITTEES OF THE VILLAGE POOR

June 11, 1918

*Introduction of the class struggle into the peasant village was one of Lenin's favorite themes. In June, 1918 the government ordered the setting up of Committees of the Rural Poor to do so and to facilitate grain requisitioning. The Committees also were to replace the village soviets, which were Left SR strongholds. Because of the weakness of Bolshevik party organizations in the villages, and because the government's procurement policies were meeting strong peasant resistance, it was necessary to rely heavily on Red Army units and workers' food detachments to get the unpopular Committees organized. The Committees succeeded in dividing the villages into warring factions, which in turn both facilitated grain requisitioning (see August 4, below) and stimulated the peasant revolts which broke out in many areas that summer. In the fall they were merged into the new, more Bolshevik, village soviets, the leaders of which often came from the Committees.*



DECREE OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN SOVIET CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON  
ORGANIZATION OF THE VILLAGE POOR AND SUPPLYING THEM WITH BREAD,  
OBJECTS OF FIRST NECESSITY AND AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS

I. Township and village Committees of the Poor, organized by the local Soviets with the obligatory participation of the food organizations and under the general guidance of the Food Commissariat and the All-Russian Soviet Executive Committee, are to be established everywhere. All the Soviets are requested to begin the execution of this decree immediately. The provincial and county Soviets must take a most active part in the organization of the village Committees of the Poor. The provincial and county Soviets are responsible, equally with the township and village Soviets, for the precise carrying out of this decree.

II. Both native and newly arrived inhabitants of the villages may elect and be elected into the township and village Committees of the Poor without limitation, with the exception of notorious kulaks and rich people, proprietors who have a surplus of grain and other food products, who possess commercial and industrial enterprises which use hired labor, etc.

Note. Peasants who employ hired labor to carry on their farms, if these do not exceed the average size, may elect and be elected into the village Committees of the Poor.

III. The township and village Committees of the Poor exercise the following functions:

(a) Distribution of bread, objects of first necessity and agricultural implements.

(b) Aiding the local food organizations in taking away surplus grain from the kulaks and the rich.

IV. The township and village Committees themselves decide which people they are to supply with bread, objects of first necessity and agricultural implements. Decisions which are taken by the township and village Committees of the Poor in agreement with the county food organizations may be repealed by higher food organizations if they are inconsistent with the basic purposes of the organization of the village poor.

V. The special stocks of bread, objects of first necessity and agricultural implements which are formed by the local food organizations, depending on the present reserves and the measure of the need of the population, pass under the control of the township Committees of the Poor.

VI. Distribution of grain, objects of first necessity and agricultural implements among the village poor on the privileged conditions which are outlined below is carried out by the village Committees of the Poor according to lists made up by them and approved by the township Committees of the Poor.

Note. Distribution lists made up by the village and confirmed by the township Committees of the Poor may be questioned by the county and provincial Soviets and by the corresponding food organizations.

VII. The distribution of bread, objects of first necessity and agricultural implements is carried out according to scales worked out by the provincial food organizations in strict accordance with the general plans of supply of the Food Commissariat and the scales established by the provincial food organizations.

Note. The amount of the bread ration distributed to the poor may vary in different periods of distribution among the provincial and food organizations, depending on the need for bread in the consuming regions and the success in taking bread away from the kulaks and the rich.

VIII. The following rules of bread distribution are laid down temporarily, pending the issue of a special order by the Food Commissariat:

(a) Out of the surplus grain taken away from the kulaks and the rich according to the decision of the provincial and county Soviets and the corresponding food organizations and delivered to the state grain storehouses before July 15 of this year grain is distributed to the village poor free of charge at the established scales at the expense of the state.

(b) From the surplus grain taken from the kulaks and the rich after July 15 but not later than August 15 of this year distribution of the grain to the village poor is made according to the established scales for payment with a reduction of fifty percent from the fixed price.

(c) From the surplus grain taken from the kulaks and the rich during the second half of August of this year grain is distributed to the village poor at the established scales for payment, with a reduction of twenty percent from the fixed price.

IX. The following basic rules for the distribution of objects of first necessity and the simplest agricultural implements to the township Committees of the Poor are laid down temporarily, pending a special order of the Food Commissariat:

(a) In townships where by July 15 of this year, according to the provincial and county Soviets and the corresponding food organizations, the surplus grain has been completely taken away from the kulaks and the rich, objects of first necessity and the simplest agricultural implements are given to the village poor at a reduction of fifty percent from the established prices.

(b) In townships where the surplus grain will have been taken from the kulaks and the rich by August 15 of this year objects of first necessity and simplest agricultural implements will be given to the village poor at a reduction of twenty-five percent from the established prices.

(c) In townships where the surplus grain will have been taken from the kulaks and the rich during the second half of August of this year objects of first necessity and the simplest agricultural implements will be given to the village poor at a reduction of fifteen percent from the established prices.

X. The township Committees of the Poor take charge of more complicated agricultural machines in order to organize public tilling of the fields and harvesting for the village poor. For the use of this machinery payment must not be collected in regions where the township and village Committees of the Poor give energetic aid to the food organizations in taking away the surplus from the rich and the kulaks.

XI. For the realization of this decree the Food Commissariat receives money and resources in the necessary amount and according to need by decision of the Council of People's Commissars.

Chamberlin, Vol. 2, pp. 465-468. See Permissions page.



## EXPULSION OF THE SRs AND MENSHEVIKS FROM THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

June 14, 1918

*The Mensheviks and the SRs (as distinct from the Left SRs, who were by now a separate party) had from the October Revolution challenged the legitimacy of the government and had refused to participate, even though they continued to accept election to the All-Russian Congresses of Soviets and to local soviets. With civil war beginning in earnest and many SRs moving toward armed opposition, the Bolsheviks moved to consolidate political power further by ousting the SRs—and for good measure the Mensheviks—from the Central Executive Committee. This may have been intended also to undermine support they had among peasants and workers.*

## DECREE OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Whereas:

1. The Soviet authority is passing through an exceptionally difficult moment, resisting simultaneously the attack of international imperialism on all fronts and of the latter's allies within the Russian Republic, who do not hesitate to use any methods in their struggle against the Workers' and Peasants' Government, from the most shameless slander to conspiracy and armed uprisings;

2. The presence in the Soviet organizations of representatives of parties that clearly strive to discredit and overthrow the authority of the Soviets is absolutely inadmissible;

3. It is clearly revealed from documents already published and from documents read in the present session that representatives of the party of Socialist-Revolutionaries (Right and Center) and of the Russian Social-Democratic Worker's Party (Mensheviks), including even the most responsible, have been found guilty of organizing armed uprisings against workers and peasants in alliance with frank counter-revolutionaries—on the Don with Kaledin and Kornilov, on the Ural with Dutov, in Siberia with Semenov, Horvat, and Kolchak, and, finally, quite recently with the Czecho-Slovaks and the reactionaries who have joined the latter;

Therefore, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of Soviets resolves to exclude from its membership representatives of the parties of Socialist-Revolutionaries (Right and Center), Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party (Mensheviks), and also to propose to all Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants', and Cossacks' Deputies to remove the representatives of these fractions from their midst.

*Memorandum on the Bolshevik or Communist Party in Russia, p. 17.*



## TRAVEL IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

June 27-28, 1918

*Travel at this time became difficult, unpredictable and sometimes dangerous; these features appear in this account of Babine's trip from Saratov to his ancestral village of Elatma. The account also reflects the food problem and the expeditions to search for foodstuffs typical of the era (about Babine, see the introduction to December 28, 1917).*

June 27, 1918. At 5:17 P.M. I was at last on a train to Riazan. The train was very crowded, and it took me some time to secure a seat in the passageway. At Atkarsk and Rtishchevo bread peddlers appeared, selling four-and five-pound loaves for 12-14 rubles, the same loaves that usually had sold for 20-25 kopecks. Many passengers took advantage of this: "A loaf this size costs no less than 50 rubles in Moscow," they explained. Our porters were especially busy. In their compartment they had a special closet filled with breadstuffs for Moscow.

June 28, 1918. When our train stopped at Kozlov at about 11 A.M., we saw Red Army men rushing back and forth along one of the trains that had come before us and ordering the passengers to get out of the cars with their baggage. After a while both the passengers and their baggage were allowed to return to the cars, and the train pulled out. In about two hours of impatient waiting three or four armed ragamuffins went through our train, ordering the people to give up their firearms and searching the passengers and their baggage. In less than an hour a youthful armed ruffian went through the cars, commanding everybody to get out and to carry his or her baggage "to Kozlov." Since the town was some four miles from

the station and the day was very hot, and some passengers had too much baggage to take it anywhere in the absence of proper accommodations, they appealed to the "comrade's" good sense and suggested that there might be some mistake about the order as he had propounded it. He disappeared for a few minutes, to return with an announcement that the baggage was not to be taken to Kozlov. But in about two minutes another armed individual appeared who peremptorily repeated the demand to take the baggage to Kozlov. Having no intention to do so, I entrusted Boss to one of my neighbors and went to look for the almighty commissar himself, to whose sweet will the crazy order had been credited. After a long hunt I finally spotted him entering our car and hurried after him. A sentry at the door tried to stop me. But my chin quickly and firmly went up; without even opening my mouth I showed him with my eyes and with a majestic motion of my right hand with whom it was my pleasure to confer, and entered the car without opposition. To my surprise there were absolutely no passengers or baggage in it—except my own five pieces which were reposing on the racks. I showed the "comrade" my personal identification papers connecting me quite impressively with my university, and pulled a bunch of keys from my pocket. "I'll be pleased to open any or all of it," I suggested. "Which is your baggage?" he asked curtly, and when I pointed to the scandalous amount of worldly goods I carried with me our democratic times he as curtly said with a quick glance at the racks: "Your baggage has been examined," and resumed his interrupted inspection through our train.

I immediately joined Boss, and began to watch my neighbors' and everybody else's baggage pulled out of its containers and scattered in front of our now empty train. An ugly looking cur of a soldier, seeing me caressing Boss, wanted to have him shot on the spot: food should not be spent on a dog when so many people were starving. It took some effort to assure the scoundrel that I would hang my dog with my own hands after the hunting season was over. The compromise was accepted, and the noble animal to whom I owed so much was saved.

While I was pleading for Boss, I noticed one of my fellow passengers, an emaciated old peasant who had managed to get 100 lbs. of rye flour for his family, on his knees before a commissar: he was imploring the Bolshevik to let him keep his treasure and save his family from death by starvation. The poor man was not with us when the train was at last allowed to proceed. Along the tracks toward Kozlov we saw large crowds of tattered men and women going south on foot in quest of bread. At Riazhsk a large quantity of flour was loaded on the roof on our car, which was filled with bread hunters, like many a train we met.

The train reached Riazan at 7 P.M. Finding the cabs too expensive, I accepted the services of a drayman who took another passenger besides me to the boat landing along with our baggage.

At the landing I found a long ticket line, and secured a ticket and a stateroom only through an old-time employee and a fair tip. The fare proved to be extremely high in comparison with the good old times, and so were the meals aboard the steamer. The pleasure of traveling on nationalized craft costs money.

A rumor is current that the Slovaks have taken Penza and are moving westward, toward Moscow. No trains have run from Riazan to Penza for several days, and our steamboat was packed with ragged, dirty, and ill-smelling peasants.

On the river bank by the boat landing a middle-aged, weather-beaten, sandy-complexioned peasant was telling about his bread hunting experiences. "We got two carloads somewhere near Viatka.... At Simbirsk the Red Army men tried to confiscate our flour, but we—eighty of us, all told—pointed to our army muskets.... After that they entrenched themselves and opened fire on us with machine guns. But we got through all right." [elipses in original, ed.]

## NATIONALIZATION OF INDUSTRY

June 28, 1918

*At first nationalization of industry proceeded more as individual actions and local initiatives than as a result of a central plan. Most of the plants nationalized in the winter and spring of 1917-1918 were a result of actions by local soviets or workers and most factories were nationalized singly rather than as whole branches of industry (as central planners desired). In early summer of 1918, faced with a clause in the peace treaties with Germany which required immediate indemnification for all losses to German owners and stockholders of property nationalized after July 1, and perhaps hoping to get better control of the process of nationalization, this sweeping act of nationalization was decreed. The act had a tremendous long-term impact on Soviet economic policies and on Soviet relations with the Western industrialized powers.*

DECREE OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS ON THE  
NATIONALIZATION OF ENTERPRISES IN A NUMBER OF INDUSTRIES,

RAILWAY TRANSPORT, ENTERPRISES, PUBLIC UTILITIES AND STEAM MILLS

In order to overcome economic dislocation and food shortages, and to consolidate the dictatorship of the working class and the village poor, the Council of People's Commissars has resolved:

I. To declare the following industrial and commercial-industrial enterprises situated on the territory of the Soviet Republic, with all their capital and properties in whatever form, the property of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic:

*In the mining industry*

(1) all enterprises owned by joint-stock companies or partnerships, extracting mineral fuel (coal, lignite, combustible shales, anthracite, etc.).

(2) All iron and copper ore mining enterprises owned by joint-stock companies or partnerships.

(3) All platinum mining enterprises.

(4) All tungsten mining enterprises.

(5) All silver, lead and zinc mining enterprises.

(6) All enterprises in the asbestos industry.

(7) The following gold-mining enterprises:

(a) the Lena Goldfields Partnership; (b) the Kochkar Goldfields Company and all enterprises of the Kochkar system; (c) the Upper Amur Gold-Mining Company; (d) the Amur Gold-Mining Company; (e) the Russian Gold-Mining Company; (f) the Fedorovskoye Gold-Mining Company; (g) the South Siberian Gold-Mining Company; (h) the Amgun-Gold-Mining Company; (i) the Miassy Gold-Mining Partnership; (j) the South Altai Gold-Mining Company; (k) the Olkhovsky Gold Mines Joint-Stock Company; (l) the Altai Gold-Mining Company; (m) the Lower Selenga Partnership; (n) the Tsimanskaye Gold-Mining Company; (o) the Mariinsk Goldfields Company; (p) the Yeltsov and Levashov Partnership; (q) the Draga Joint-Stock Company; (r) the Okhotskoye Gold-Mining Partnership; (s) the Aidarly-Kvarken Goldfields; (t) the Moscow Timber Partnership (the North Zaozerye Woodland); (u) the Trans-Urals Mining Partnership.

(8) The following salt-extracting enterprises:

(a) the Kuli Salt Extracting Company (Lake Kuli); (b) the Molla-Kara salt extracting enterprise belonging to Ter-Avanesov; (c) all the Usolye salt works;

*In the metallurgical and metalworking industries*

(9) All enterprises owned by joint-stock companies or partnerships, with a basic capital of one million roubles or more, as well as all large enterprises the aggregate property of which equals or exceeds one million roubles according to the latest balance sheet, and which are engaged in one or several of the following types of production: smelting of iron

and copper; manufacturing of semifinished products from them and treatment of the said semi-finished products by rolling, drawing, stamping and by chemical methods; manufacture of all kinds of machines (engines, mechanical implements, agricultural machinery, etc.), aircraft, self-propelled vehicles; shipbuilding, steam locomotives and railway coachbuilding; building of bridges and steel structures; making of precision instruments, firearms, machine-guns, artillery pieces and their parts; manufacture of metal frames and other articles from metal, excluding air brakes.

(10) In addition, all enterprises turning out metal articles which are not manufactured anywhere else in the Russian Federative Republic are declared the property of the Russian Federative Republic, irrespective of the size of their basic capital.

*In the textile industry*

(11) All cotton-processing enterprises owned by joint-stock companies and partnerships, with a basic capital of not less than one million roubles.

(12) All enterprises owned by joint-stock companies and partnerships which process wool, flax, silk and jute, as well as finishing and dyeing enterprises, with a basic capital of not less than 500,000 roubles.

(13) All hemp-processing enterprises owned by joint stock companies and partnerships, with a basic capital of not less than 200,000 roubles.

*In the electrical engineering industry*

(14) All power stations owned by joint-stock companies and partnerships, producing electricity for commercial purposes and possessing a basic capital of not less than one million roubles.

(15) All electrical engineering enterprises owned by joint-stock companies and partnerships, manufacturing dynamo machines, electric motors, transformers, electrical measuring instruments and other electrical goods, with a basic capital of not less than one million roubles.

(16) All cable works owned by joint-stock companies and partnerships with a basic capital of not less than one million roubles.

*In the timber and woodworking industry*

(17) All sawmills owned by joint-stock companies and partnerships, with a basic capital of not less than one million roubles.

(18) All mechanized woodworking enterprises owned by joint-stock companies and partnerships.

*In the tobacco industry*

(19) All enterprises, owned by joint-stock companies and partnerships, incorporating tobacco factories and having a basic capital of not less than 500,000 roubles (according to 1914 data), and those incorporating shag factories and having a basic capital of not less than 300,000 roubles (according to 1914 data).

*In the rubber industry*

(20) All enterprises of the rubber industry.

*In the glass and ceramic industry*

(21) All enterprises owned by joint-stock companies and partnerships, producing glass, cut glass, mirrors, chemical glass, bottle glass, chinaware, faience, pottery, glazed tile, ceramics, majolica and terracotta, with a basic capital of not less than 500,000 roubles (according to 1914 data).

*In the leather and shoemaking industry*

(22) All shoe-making factories and tanneries owned by joint-stock companies and partnerships with a basic capital of not less than 500,000 roubles (according to 1914 data).

*In the cement industry*

(23) All cement plant owned by joint-stock companies and partnerships, with a productive capacity of not less than 500,000 barrels a year.

*Steam mills*

(24) All steam mills owned by joint-stock companies and partnerships, with a fixed capital of not less than 500,000 roubles.

*Public utilities*

(25) All water-supply enterprises, gas works, electric and horse-driven tramlines and sewerage enterprises throughout the Soviet Republic become the property of the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies.

*Railway transport*

(26) All enterprises of private railway companies, including auxiliary tracks, both in operation and under construction.

*In other industries*

(27) All cellulose and wood pulp enterprises owned by joint-stock companies and partnerships.

(28) All enterprises of joint-stock companies and partnerships incorporating factories producing writing paper, cardboard, cardboard articles and cigarette paper with basic capital of not less than 300,000 roubles (according to 1914 data).

(29) All enterprises of joint-stock companies and partnerships incorporating artificial fat, soap and stearin works with a basic capital of not less than one million roubles (according to 1914 data), and tallow-melting and oil mills with a basic capital of not less than 500,000 roubles (according to 1914 data).

(30) All enterprises of joint-stock companies and partnerships which incorporate plants producing: (1) mineral acids; (2) calcium, carbide, and (3) charcoal, with a basic capital of not less than 500,000 roubles (according to 1914 data).

(31) All enterprises of the Petrograd Bone-Roasting Company.

(32) Enterprises of: (1) the Joint-Stock Company for the manufacture and marketing of gunpowder (Winner's); (2) the Russian Company for the manufacture and marketing of gunpowder (Schlusselburg); and (3) the Baranovsky Gunpowder Works Company.

Note. Unless specified otherwise, the basic capital of joint-stock companies and partnerships is calculated according to data for 1916 or the last period accounted for ending in 1916. In the case of enterprises founded after 1916 the calculation is carried out according to the latest data for the year when the statute of the enterprise was approved.

II. The appropriate departments of the Supreme Economic Council are instructed urgently to organize management of the nationalized enterprises, with observance of all the previously issued relevant decrees and under the general guidance of the presidium of the Supreme Economic Council.

With respect to the enterprises mentioned in Section I, Paragraph 24 of this Decree (steam mills), this commission is entrusted to the Commissariat for Food Supply with full observance of all the previously issued decrees on the management of nationalized enterprises.

With respect to the enterprises mentioned in Section I, Paragraph 25 of this Decree (public utilities), the same commission is entrusted, on the same condition, to the local Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies.

With respect to the enterprises mentioned in Section I, Paragraph 26 of this Decree (railways and subsidiary lines), the same commission is entrusted to the Commissariat of Railways, subject to ultimate approval by the Council of People's Commissars.

III. Pending a special decision of the Supreme Economic Council regarding each particular enterprise, the enterprises declared under this Decree to be the property of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic are regarded as leased to their former owners gratis; their boards and former owners continue to finance them and receive profits in the usual manner.

IV. From the moment of the issue of this Decree, the board members, directors and other executives of nationalized enterprises are accountable to the Soviet Republic for their safety and normal operation.

Those who abandon their offices without the consent of the appropriate agencies of the Supreme Economic Council, or inexcusably mismanage the affairs of the enterprise, not only

answer to the Republic with all their property but will be prosecuted in the courts of the Republic as for a grave criminal offence.

V. The entire office, technical and operative personnel of a nationalized enterprise, as well as the directors, board members and other executives, are declared to be in the service of the Soviet Socialist Federative Republic, and are paid according to the rates that existed prior to nationalization, out of the profits and working capital of the enterprise.

Members of the technical and managerial personnel of nationalized enterprises who abandon their offices are answerable to a revolutionary tribunal, with all the severity of the law.

VI. The personal means of board members, shareholders and owners of nationalized enterprises are sequestered until the relationship of the sums involved to the working capital and resources of the enterprises is ascertained.

VII. The boards of all nationalized enterprises are instructed to draw up without delay balance-sheets as on July 1, 1918.

VIII. The Supreme Economic Council is instructed to work out in the shortest time possible, and to dispatch to all nationalized enterprises, detailed instructions on the organization of management and on the tasks of the workers' organizations stemming from this decree.

IX. Enterprises belonging to consumers' cooperative societies and partnerships and their associations are not subject to conversion into the property of the Republic.

X. This Decree becomes effective from the day of its signing. Moscow, June 28, 1918.

Akhapkin, pp. 147-153. See Permissions page.



## ALLIED DECISION TO INTERVENE

July 2, 1918

*The Allied governments had difficulty agreeing on a policy toward Russia. In general the French were most inclined to intervene, the Americans most opposed, and the British in between. Nonetheless, they had been drawn into landing British troops in Murmansk in March and Japanese, American and British troops in Vladivostok in April. By June the French were actively supporting the conversion of the Czechoslovak Legion into an interventionist force. The main Allied objectives were the war with Germany, especially reestablishment of the Eastern Front and safeguarding war supplies which had been sent to Russia (although Japan was probably more concerned with expansion of influence in the Far East). Finally, on July 2, 1918, the Supreme War Council, meeting at Versailles, set forth the arguments for systematic Allied intervention. Although the American response did not meet all of the expectations of the Council's resolution (see below, July 17, 1918), the resolution provided the basis for expanded Allied intervention.*

The Supreme War Council consider that since its last meeting a complete change has come over the situation in Russia and Siberia, which makes Allied intervention in these countries an urgent and imperative necessity.

In the first place the recent action of the Czecho-Slovak troops has transformed the Siberian eclipse. There is now a force of 50,000 troops, of Slav nationality, totally disinterested in the internal politics of Russia, yet determined fight Germany for the liberation



of their own country, in control of the railway in western Siberia. This success of the Czecho-Slovak troops proves that the bulk of the Siberian population are no longer sympathetic to the Bolsheviks and must be friendly disposed to the Allied cause. It also removes the apprehension that Allied intervention will meet with such serious opposition from the local population east of the Urals as would make penetration through western Siberia to the Urals very difficult. Provided intervention takes place in time, there will be a Slav army in western Siberia to which Russian patriots can rally, which eliminates the return of Russian public opinion [*sic*] being thrown into the arms of Germany as might have been the case if intervention were effected by forces almost entirely Japanese. This Czecho-Slovak force, however, is in grave danger of being cut off by the organization of German and Austro-Hungarian prisoners of war at Irkutsk, and an appeal for immediate military assistance has been made by the Czech National Council to the Allied consuls at Vladivostok. The Allies are under the responsibility of taking immediate action, if these gallant allies are not to be overwhelmed. To fail in bringing support to these faithful troops, now desperately fighting for the Allied cause, would not only forever discredit the Allies, but might have a disastrous effect on the Slav population both of Russia itself and of Austria-Hungary and the Balkans as proving that the Allies are unable or unwilling to exert themselves effectively to save the Slav world from falling wholly under German domination. On the other hand to push a force through to Irkutsk to overwhelm the German prisoner organization and join hands with the Czecho-Slovaks would probably be a simple and rapid matter if it were taken in hand immediately. Intervention in Siberia, therefore, is an urgent necessity both to save the Czecho-Slovaks and to take advantage of an opportunity of gaining control of Siberia for the Allies which may never return.

In the second place a great change has come over the internal situation in Russia itself. There is no doubt that the Bolshevik power is waning. It is daily becoming clearer to all classes in Russia including ex-soldiers, peasants, and workmen that the Bolsheviks cannot fulfill their promises of the social millennium, and that anarchy, disorder and starvation lie ahead under the Bolshevik regime. The accounts from all our representatives agree upon this. It is further clear that the Bolsheviks have no real power with which to support their rule. They have entirely failed to raise an effective army. They remain in office simply because Russia is too divided to create any alternative organization with which to supplant them.

There is much evidence, however, that the best liberal and democratic elements in Russia are beginning to lift their heads and to get into touch with one another. They are animated partly by disgust with the autocratic methods of the Bolsheviks, partly by the determination not to submit to the humiliation and partition of the Brest Litovsk treaties, and partly by a growing fear of German domination.

Practically all elements of the Russian population indeed except the dwindling minority of the Bolsheviks now recognize intervention of some kind to be necessary and inevitable because it is the only alternative to continuous anarchy and disorder ending in universal starvation. The only difference of opinion is as to whether intervention should be Allied or German. The reactionaries and the pro-German agents among the Bolsheviks naturally prefer German intervention. The liberal and democratic elements urgently ask for Allied intervention, and make it clear while they desire economic assistance, the essential need is military support. Unless they can secure effective Allied support in the field, and a base upon which to rally, the reactionary forces, backed by German bayonets, will inevitably crush the movement for national freedom and regeneration.

Allied intervention therefore is urgently necessary in order to save Russia from the establishment of autocracy supported by German bayonets. If, however, the Allies are to bring effective assistance to liberal Russia, not only must they occupy Murmansk and Archangel in order to retain the bridgeheads into Russia from the north from which forces can eventually advance rapidly to the center of Russia, they must also control Siberia to the Urals without delay. If the Germans gain control of western Siberia, as well as of Archangel

and Murmansk, they close the last means of contact between Russia and the outside world, and they obtain possession of the supplies of food without which Russia will starve. The Germans have already made the Black Sea a German [lake]. They are advancing as fast as they can on the Caspian which will give them control of the Volga and its water communications with western Siberia, and they are preparing to occupy the Murman coast before winter. If they once succeed in these objects the German domination of Russia would be complete. They will then not only control Russian resources, but under penalty of starvation they may be able to compel the Russian people to serve as labor, and possibly even as recruits for their armies in the field. All hope of the regeneration of Russia on truly democratic lines depends upon the seizure by the Allies of the granary of western Siberia without delay.

In the third place Allied intervention is essential in order to win the war. There is no doubt that if the Germans fail to gain a decision in the west in the next few weeks they will turn east and endeavor with all their power to paralyze any possibility of the national regeneration of Russia during the war. They know as well as we know that there is but the smallest chance of an Allied victory on the western front in 1919 unless Germany is compelled to transfer a considerable amount of her strength back again from west to east. It will therefore be a primary object of her policy to prevent the re-creation of an eastern Allied front. During the forthcoming autumn and winter she will endeavor to do this either by establishing in Russia a government favorable to herself or destroying all possibility of organized resistance to her domination. If the Allies are to win the war in 1919 it should be a primary object of their policy to foster and assist the national movement in Russia in order to reform an eastern front or at least to sustain such a vigorous spirit of independence in the occupied territories behind the German lines as will compel Germany to maintain large bodies of troops in the east. Allied intervention at the earliest moment is therefore a necessity if any headway is to be made in organizing that eastern front which is essential, if the Allies are to win the war in 1919 before Germany has concentrated her whole strength once more on the encirclement and domination of Russia. At the present moment intervention as a practical policy is easier than it has ever been.

The Japanese have now agreed to send an expedition into Siberia provided they are assured of the approval and active support of the United States Government and though they have not engaged themselves to go beyond Irkutsk there is no ground for thinking that this necessarily represents the limits of their effort. They have also accepted the two conditions which the Supreme War Council has considered as necessary conditions of Allied intervention; namely, disinterestedness in Russian internal politics and guarantees to evacuate Russian territory after the war. The Czecho-Slovak forces are already in occupancy of western Siberia. The addition of American and Allied detachments would create a force really Allied in character and acceptable to both Russian and Allied occupants especially if Russian forces under Russian leaders were associated with it as soon as it was established in territory. If action were taken immediately it ought to be possible for the Allies to gain control of the railway through the whole of Siberia as far as the Urals in a very few weeks. Only the assent and cooperation of the United States Government is now required in order to set in motion a policy which promises success and which if successfully accomplished is bound to have decisive results on the future of the war.

On the other hand the Supreme War Council feel bound to point out that in their judgment failure to intervene immediately must inevitably cause effects which can only be described as disastrous to the Allied cause. In the first place it would mean the abandonment of the Russian people to the [triumphant] militarism of Germany and the destruction of all hope of the resuscitation of Russia as the liberal ally of the western democracies during the war. In the second place it would mean the permanent impairment of the blockade for if Germany were to establish effective control over central Russia and Siberia her chief anxiety as to the supply both of raw material and food would be removed. In the third place it would mean the indefinite prolongation of the war and the surrender of any real prospect of victory for

the Allies in 1919. Fourthly, it would mean the abandonment of the army of yet another little nation, the Czecho-Slovaks, to the mercies of Berlin with inevitably disastrous consequences to the sentiments of the Slav peoples of Russia, the Balkans and throughout the world.

If the policy of intervention however is to be really successful, an adequate military force must be employed. The Allied representatives in Russia are agreed that while economic assistance is important, military intervention is absolutely essential. The Czecho-Slovak leaders have informed the Allied consuls at Vladivostok that in their judgment 100,000 men are necessary to save the situation. It is evident therefore that while the rest of the Allies should send what troops they can, the bulk of the force must be provided by the Japanese.

For these reasons the Supreme War Council, having carefully considered the military situation and the prospects of the Allies in all the theaters of war, have come to conclusion—

I. That immediate Allied armed assistance to Russia is imperatively necessary for the following reasons:

(a) To assist the Russian nation to throw off their German oppressors and to prevent the unlimited military and economic domination of Russia by Germany in her own interests.

(b) For the decisive military reason given by General Foch in his telegram to President Wilson; i.e., that the Germans have already called back from Russia a number of divisions and sent them to the western front. Allied intervention will be the first step in stimulating the national uprising in Russia against German domination which will have an immediate effect in renewing German anxiety in regard to the east and compelling her to refrain from removing further troops westward and perhaps to move troops back to the east.

(c) To shorten the war by the reconstitution of the Russian front.

(d) To prevent the isolation of Russia from western Europe. They are advised that if action is not taken in Siberia the existing Allied forces in northern Russia may have to be withdrawn and Russia will be completely cut off from the Allies.

(e) To deny to Germany the supplies of western Siberia and the important military stores at Vladivostok and to render these available for the Russian population.

(f) To bring assistance to the Czecho-Slovak forces which have made great sacrifices to the cause for which we are fighting.

II. That the intervention should be Allied in character, should be accompanied by pledges to the Russian people as agreed to at the last Versailles conference, and should include the following:

1. An Allied force to operate in Siberia. Circumstances render imperative that the force shall be considerable in number, military in character and Allied in composition, and that above all things it should operate immediately; delay would be fatal. It is recognized that owing to geographical and shipping conditions Japanese troops will comprise the larger portion of the force but its Allied character must be maintained and it must include American and Allied units. The force should be under a single command appointed by the power that provides the largest number of troops.

2. Such developments of the Allied forces in Murmansk and Archangel as the military advisers of the Allies may recommend.

3. Relief expeditions under American direction and control to supply the wants and alleviate the sufferings of the Russian people.

The primary object of Allied action being to cooperate with the Russian nation in re-creating the eastern front as a first step towards freeing Russia, the closest coordination must exist between the above forces and the Russian people.

III. Therefore, in view of—

1. The unanimous opinion of General Foch and the Allied military advisers of the Supreme War Council that immediate dispatch of a considerable Allied force to Siberia is essential for the victory of the Allied armies;

2. The fact that no adequate expedition can be sent without Japanese cooperation and that Japan will not undertake effective action without the encouragement and support of the United States Government; and

3. The shortness of the time available before the winter for initiating active operations in Siberia and the rapid German penetration into Russia: the Supreme War Council appeal to President Wilson to approve the policy here recommended and thus to enable it to be carried into effect before it is too late.

*Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918, Russia, Vol. 2, pp. 241-246.*



## THE LEFT SR ASSASSINATION OF THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR AND ATTACK ON THE BOLSHEVIKS

July 6-7, 1918

*The Left SRs were frustrated by their disputes with the Bolsheviks within the soviets, and especially their failure to get the peace with Germany repudiated. They tried to force the issue by assassinating the German ambassador, Count Mirbach, on July 6, and staging a poorly organized attack on the Bolsheviks, even accidentally taking the head of the Cheka, Dzerzhinsky, prisoner. Both actions were facilitated by the prominence of Left SRs in the Cheka. As their statement shows, the Left SRs were not attempting a counter-revolutionary overthrow of "Soviet Power," of which they considered themselves a part, but to force a major change in policies. The threat to Bolshevik dominance was quickly overcome and was followed by extensive repressive measures against the Left SRs. The Bolsheviks now ruled without any coalition partners. The following documents are two Left SR announcements, the Soviet (Bolshevik) account of events, and Dzerzhinsky's account; all of these were published in Izvestiia on July 8.*

### I

*"Thou shalt gain thy rights by fighting."*

The executioner of the labouring Russian people, the friend and agent of William, Count Mirbach, has been assassinated by the avenging hand of a revolutionary, by order of the Central Committee of the party of Left S.R.'s. The executioner, Mirbach, has been killed just on the day and at the hour when the death sentence of the labouring masses was being finally signed, when the land, the gold, the forests and all the wealth of the labouring people were being surrendered to the German landowners and capitalists by agreement, and when the noose was being finally tightened round the neck of the proletariat and labouring peasantry. The German spies and provocators, who have filled Moscow and are partly armed, demand the death of the Left S.R.'s, while the ruling section of the Bolsheviks, frightened at the possible consequences, are carrying out, as hitherto, the orders of the German hangmen. All must come out for the defence of the Revolution! All must come out to fight the international Imperialist robbers! All must come out for the defence of those who fight the German despots! Come forward, you working men and working women and Red Army men, for the defence of the labouring people against the hangmen, spies and provocatory Imperialists! Forward for the overthrow of German Imperialism which is starving us! Death to all hangmen and brutes of Imperialism! Shame on those who, together with the German

spies, are proceeding to suppress the rising of the workers and peasants! Long live the rising against the hangmen! Death to the Imperialists! Long live the world's Socialist Revolution!

## II

### *Bulletin No. 1 of the Left S.R.s*

On July 6, at 3 p.m., the fighting detachment of the party of the Left S.R.'s killed the Ambassador of German Imperialism, Count Mirbach, and his two assistants, in the German Embassy. One of the comrades, while discharging his revolutionary duties, was wounded, but no outsider sustained any injury. The President of the Special Committee for Fighting the Counter-Revolution, Dzerzhinsky, who had come to conduct the inquiry into the Mirbach affair, ordered the arrest of two members of the Central Committee of the party, Proshyan and Karelin, declaring at the same time that one of the members of the Central Committee of the party would have to pay with his life for Mirbach. By the decision of the Central Committee, Dzerzhinsky was temporarily detained. Comrades Spiridonova and Golubovsky have been sent to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets to lead the representatives of the party there and to defend our revolutionary position. The Central Committee feels assured that the hand of no worker or peasant will be raised against our comrades. Latsis, a member of the Special Committee, has also been provisionally detained, and the Central Committee hereby informs the labouring masses that the Bolshevik comrades will be released as soon as possible. The Central Committee of the party takes under its protection the inviolability of all the members of the party group at the Congress of Soviets, and warns the population of the city of Moscow that all attempts of the dark and counter-revolutionary forces, White Guards and German and Allied provocators and spies, of the Right S.R.'s and Mensheviks, to overthrow the Soviet regime, will be ruthlessly suppressed. There must be no panic and no confusion and all must come forward for the defence of the conquests of the Social Revolution.

## III

### *Bolshevik Account of the Events*

The insane rising of the so-called Left S.R.'s has been suppressed. The judicial authorities will in the next few days elucidate the exact facts concerning this unparalleled adventure, and will establish the responsibility falling upon the individuals who took part in it. But the political meaning of the events of July 6 and 7 in Moscow is perfectly clear at the present moment. Yielding to the pressure of the bourgeois classes of society, the Left S.R.'s had made during the last few weeks more and more persistent efforts to draw Russia into a war with Germany. These endeavours manifested themselves, not only in the practice of constantly pointing out the exceptionally harsh terms of the Brest Treaty, but also in the invention and spreading of monstrous rumours and suspicions calculated to excite the popular imagination. The intelligent workers and peasants realise, of course, quite clearly the harsh character of the Brest terms. But they realise not less clearly the consequences which would follow if exhausted and white-bled Russia were to be drawn into the Imperialist slaughter. It is for this reason that the overwhelming majority of workers and peasants have repeatedly repudiated the idea of annulling the Brest Treaty, as vehemently demanded by the Cadets, Right S.R.'s, Mensheviks and Left S.R.'s. The failure of their demagogic agitation in favour of war drove the Left S.R.'s on to the path of a senseless and dishonest adventure. They decided to draw Russia into a war against the will of the workers and peasants by means of a terrorist act. After the 5th All-Russian Congress of Soviets had emphatically approved the foreign policy of the Council of People's Commissars, a certain Blyumkin assassinated the German Ambassador, Count Mirbach, by order of the Central Committee of the Party of Left S.R.'s. In carrying out this act of provocation the Left S.R.'s relied, not so much on their party machinery, as on the official position they occupied as a Soviet Party. With the help of his party, Blyumkin had become a member of the Special Committee for Fighting Counter-Revolution, used his official position to appropriate certain documents, forged some

others, and having, through his official position, gained admission to the residence of the German Ambassador, carried out the assassination, which he had been charged by the Central Committee of his Party to execute. Simultaneously the Left S.R.'s publicly opened seditious operations, having for their object to transfer by force the State authority from the All-Russian Congress of Soviets to the hands of the Party which had found itself in a minority at that congress. Members of the Central Committee of the Left S.R.'s attempted to raise a rebellion, relying on the operation of a detachment standing under the orders of the Committee for Fighting Counter-Revolution. This detachment was commanded by the Left S.R., Popov. The section of Popov's detachment, which had been drawn into the conspiracy and reinforced by certain demoralised elements recruited from among the crews of the Black Sea Fleet, posted street sentries and patrols, arrested individual representatives of the Soviet Government, and disarmed and fired on individual sections of the Red Army. The rebels had at their disposal machine-guns, cannon, and armoured-cars. Such was the course of the revolt of a Soviet Party, which was in a minority, against the authority of the Soviets on July 7. The success of the revolt, if the adventure could have succeeded, would have meant an immediate war with Germany, and the immediate collapse of the Soviet regime, since no sane man can suppose that the Left S.R.'s would have been able, even for the space of 24 hours, to retain in their hands the power wrested from the hands of the workers, peasants and Red Army soldiers. In substance, the Left S.R.'s acted on July 6 and 7 as a fighting organisation in the service of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, for which they were preparing the way. In these circumstances the Council of People's Commissars could only take one course, namely, within the shortest time possible to suppress the rising in which levity, treachery, and provocation combined in one repulsive whole. The energetic measures taken yielded results within a few hours. The Left S.R.'s were cleared out from the telegraph and other offices, where they had been busying themselves for two hours. Popov's detachment, after the first shots fired at it by the Soviet troops, became demoralised, and a considerable section of it indignantly repudiated the adventure, and went over wholeheartedly to the side of the representatives of the Soviet authority: Comrades Dzerzhinsky, Latsis, and Smidovitch, who had been taken prisoners by the rebels. It was only owing to this circumstance that their lives were saved from danger. The end of the rising was quite worthy of its beginning and of the whole course of this disgraceful adventure. Their military staff completely lost their heads, as demoralisation began to spread in the ranks of their troops. Having set themselves such a task as the seizure of State authority, the leaders of the Left S.R.'s had apparently quite failed to realise the magnitude and the importance of it, and to realise that it was far beyond their strength. The rebels, after some insignificant attempts at resistance, began sending out *parlementaires* in every possible direction, and then began a disorderly retreat. The pursuit is going on with complete success. The number of those captured already amounts to several hundred. Full details will be submitted by the Government to the next session of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, which will have the final word, both on the rising of July 6 and 7, and on the fate of the so-called Party of the Left S.R.'s as a whole.

#### IV

##### *Dzerzhinsky's Narrative.*

As soon as he was informed of the murder of Mirbach he suspected that it was the work of the Left S.R.'s. He immediately drove to Popov's Staff where he thought the assassin might be hiding. He went there with three comrades, unaccompanied by any armed escort, and asked where Blyumkin was. The reply was that Blyumkin was not there and had gone to a certain hospital. Dzerzhinsky demanded that the sentries at the gate might be brought to him and bear witness that Blyumkin had really driven away, but the sentries were not brought to him. Then, observing the hesitating attitude of Popov, and noticing Blyumkin's hat on the table, he demanded the opening of all the rooms for his search, and at the same time ordered Popov's troops, who were armed to the teeth, to remain at their posts. Accompanied

by the three comrades, he then began inspecting the rooms. At that moment, accompanied by a score or so of armed sailors, two members of the Central Committee of the Left S.R.'s, Proshyan and Karelin, came up to him and said that he was wasting his time in searching for Blyumkin, and that Blyumkin had assassinated Mirbach by order of their Central Committee.

In reply, he declared Proshyan and Karelin arrested, at the same time telling Popov, who was present, that if he, as a subordinate, did not obey him and hand over to him the two men, he would immediately send a bullet through his head as a traitor.

Proshyan and Karelin promptly replied that they would obey his order, but instead of going with him to his motor-car they went into the next room, where the Central Committee was in session, and came out with Spiridonova, Sablin, Kamkov, Cherepanov, Alexandrovitch and others, who surrounded him and ordered the surrender of arms. Dzerzhinsky turned round to the sailors and asked them whether they would permit that he, the President of the Cheka, in whose service they were, should be disarmed. The sailors obviously hesitated, whereupon Sablin summoned from another room 50 sailors, and, with the help of Proshyan, seized him by the arms and disarmed him.

Cherepanov and Sablin then said triumphantly: "You are confronted with an accomplished fact; the Treaty of Brest has been destroyed, and war with Germany is unavoidable. We do not want Government authority. Let it be so here as it is in the Ukraine. We shall become an illegal party and work underground. You must remain at the head of affairs, but you must cease being Mirbach's lackeys. Let Germany seize Russia up to the Volga. Muravyev is coming to our assistance to Moscow, the Lettish Rifle Regiment is also with us, and their delegates have already been here. We have on our side the Pokrov barracks, Vinglinsky's entire detachment, and the Aviation Service. Here are the delegates from 2,000 Don Cossacks who have arrived from Voronezh. All Moscow beyond the river is also with us, and all the workers and the Red Army of the city are joining us."

Dzerzhinsky began arguing that the Left S.R.'s were simply doing the work of "British and French bankers," and denounced them as traitors to the Revolution. At that Spiridonova harangued the sailors, branding the Bolsheviks as traitors, since they had been acting as "flunkies to Mirbach."

When Popov was called a traitor he said to Dzerzhinsky: "I obeyed you and carried out your orders until I received orders from the Central Committee of our party, which I must obey."

Dzerzhinsky explained that most of the sailors from the Black Sea Fleet, as well as Anarchists who formed part of the S.R.'s armed forces, had been recruited and installed in the detachment of the Special Committee by Popov, the commander of the detachment, acting in collusion with Alexandrovitch, Assistant President of the Cheka, without the knowledge of the other members of the Committee, after having got rid of the loyal Red Army Finns, who had been sent away, for the most part to fight the Czecho-Slovaks. He further stated that, seeing the hesitation of the sailors, Spiridonova and others held a regular meeting, while each member of the force was being served with biscuits and being given boots and sugar. At the same time it turned out that the assurances of Proshyan and Sablin were idle boasts. Vinglinsky himself was brought in as a prisoner, and it appeared that he had only succeeded in bringing over to the rebels, by various promises of foodstuffs, between 20 and 40 men. The commandant of the Pokrov barracks was also brought in. He bore witness to the fact that the barracks were entirely on the side of the Soviets. Subsequently spirits were distributed among the men, and Popov himself emptied a glass.

In the evening Sablin and Popov again came in, the latter very dejected, saying that the Congress of Soviets had adopted a resolution by Trotsky in favour of suppressing the entire party of S.R.'s. Popov also added the fact that the S.R. delegates at the Congress, including Spiridonova, had been arrested. The mood at the military staff was becoming more and more dejected with every new report, and when the first Soviet guns roared and the first shot

dropped on the Staff building the entire Central Committee of the party rushed past in flight, having previously changed their clothes. "Infamous cowards and traitors," was the reproach hurled at them by the prisoners. As the shells fell on the building and in the courtyard of the Staff, the sailors themselves took to flight, while the Finns went over to the prisoners' side, and together they walked out of the building and disarmed the remainder of Popov's detachment.

*Daily Review of the Foreign Press, Neutral Press Supplement, September 6, 1918, pp. 367-368.*



## REPORT ON THE FOOD SITUATION TO THE FIFTH CONGRESS OF SOVIETS AND RESOLUTION OF THE CONGRESS

July 9, 1918

*The food situation grew steadily more threatening as the summer wore on. This report by the Commissar for Food, A. D. Tsiurupa, not only shows something of the magnitude of the expected food shortfall, but some of the assumptions of the Bolsheviks about its cause—and hence how to solve it. The assumption that there "must be enough" stocks of food hidden away by the peasants from the previous year reduced the problem to "how to extract those surpluses," an assumption which underlay the food requisitioning detachments (see August 4 and 20). The report, and especially the resolution, also points to the serious problem created by the absence of adequate manufactured goods to trade for peasant grain and foodstuffs.*

### I. REPORT OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR OF FOOD, A.D. TSIURUPA, TO THE FIFTH ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

Without giving any detailed figures, Tsiurupa said that, according to the results of a statistical inquiry made throughout Russia last year, there ought to have been this year a surplus of grain amounting to 880 million puds in the grain producing provinces, and a deficiency amounting to 320 million puds in the other provinces of the Republic. These figures included territories now separated from Russia, such as the Ukraine and the Western provinces. Deducting them, the net surplus would only amount to 40 million puds. But Siberia and the Caucasus were also not to be relied upon at present, so that the theoretical surplus became a deficiency, since both Siberia and the Caucasus possessed a surplus of 130 million puds each. Under such circumstances the position would have been hopeless, but for the fact that the above figures only referred to the surplus of the harvest of 1917, while it was perfectly well-known that there must be an accumulation of surpluses from the preceding harvests, which, in view of the highly defective supply since the Revolution, must be considerable. There must be enough stocks in the central agricultural provinces, such as Voronezh, Kursk, Tambov, and a part of Tula, which ought to be sufficient, according to estimates, to feed, at full rations, the population in the non-producing provinces till the new harvest. The chief problem was, and had been all along, how to extract those surpluses. The Government was utterly opposed to the demands from various quarters for the abolition of the grain trade monopoly and a change in the fixed Government grain price. The Government was convinced that if prices were raised the result would be, not a further supply of bread, but a further enrichment of the village speculators. That had been proved by the results of the doubling and trebling of prices ordered by Kerensky's Government in September last year,



as well as by the experience of the Ukraine. A more recent example had been supplied by the experiment in the province of Kazan, where the food authorities had, in an unauthorised way, raised the fixed Government grain price to 12 roubles per pud. No additional grain had come forth, but instead, there was now a universal clamour for a further increase of the price to 20 roubles. A more effective measure would be the development of the system of direct exchange of grain for manufactured goods, which had been initiated by the Soviet Government shortly after its formation. So far the experiments made with that measure had not been quite satisfactory. In spite of the attraction offered by manufactured articles, the peasants did not willingly part with their grain, the chief reason being, perhaps, the absence of proper relations between the grain prices and the prices of manufactured articles. In order that the peasants should part with their grain, the manufactured articles must bear a price which would correspond in a rational way to the price of the product of peasants' labour, and that in its turn required the fixing of a corresponding rate of wages for the industrial workers, and, therefore, in the last resort, the fixing or the standardisation of the productivity of labour. But that was a task which could not be carried out immediately. The Supreme Economic Council had now appointed a special committee to work out the problem, in conjunction with the Commissariat for Food and with the Central Statistical Bureau; but the problem was complicated and would take between two or three months. It was in view of these difficulties, which were, moreover, greatly complicated by the boycott and the sabotage of the personnel of the Food Committees, at the beginning of the Soviet regime, that the Government had finally decided to apply compulsion and to issue a decree ordering the dispatch of armed detachments into the villages to extract the grain from those hoarding it. As such detachments, composed as they were for the most part of town workers, were strangers in the villages, and were even unable to discover and to judge correctly whether there were any surpluses in the villages they visited, a supplementary decree was issued for the organisation of the poorer peasants in the villages to help in the matter. The results of the practical application of that drastic measure were as yet uncertain, but it was a remarkable fact that, for instance, from the province of Vyatka, a poor agricultural province, they had succeeded, within a very short time, in extracting 150,000 puds of grain. He was quite aware that in numerous instances the first expeditionary detachments proved highly unsatisfactory, owing to the lack of discipline and intelligence. They had unnecessarily aroused the opposition of the villages, had engaged in sheer plunder and sometimes succumbed to drink. But since then effective measures had been taken, not only to punish the guilty, but also to improve the personnel of the expeditionary detachments by careful selection and strict instructions and control. At the same time it was not true to say that these expeditions were of a punitive character. They invariably carried with them goods for exchange, and only had recourse to force when all other means of inducing the village hoarders to part with their corn had proved fruitless. He had documents proving that even such poor provinces as Olonets, Archangel and Vologda had some surpluses of grain, and if only they could succeed in extracting them they would be able to manage quite satisfactorily, without any starvation, till the next harvest, even without assistance of either Siberia or the Caucasus.

## II. RESOLUTION OF THE FIFTH ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF SOVIETS ON FOOD SUPPLY

Recognizing that the consolidation of the indissoluble union between the working class and the poorer peasantry, in all branches of economic and political life of the Workers' and Peasants' Republic, is the only sure and safe means of solving the problems confronting Soviet Russia in her struggle against the capitalist world, the Fifth Congress of the Soviet of Workers', Peasants', Red Army and Cossack Delegates, expresses its complete approval of the food policy of the Council of People's Commissars. The Fifth Congress of Soviets emphatically and categorically declares that only those who are opposed to the interests of the working class and poorer peasantry can at the present moment carry on an agitation against the unswerving application of the grain monopoly and fixed prices. The inviolability

of the grain monopoly and the maintenance of fixed grain prices constitute the sole possible basis for the food policy of the Workers' and Peasants' Soviet Authority. A ruthless fight, which does not hesitate to employ the most severe measures against the greedy village usurers, who are hiding their surpluses of corn and speculating in them, is the only means of wresting the bread from their rapacious hands and of holding out, with a minimum of suffering, for the remaining and most difficult six or eight weeks till the new harvest. In this struggle for bread against the village bourgeoisie the Soviet Authority must not and cannot stop before the employment of open force against these recalcitrant enemies, the usurers of the villages. Without hiding either from itself or from others that the conduct of the food detachments in the villages, owing to the presence in them of an uneducated and unintelligent element, demoralised by the habits of the old regime, is sometimes a danger even to the average labouring peasants, the Workers' and Peasants' Government, while fighting such exhibitions of injustice and unnecessary cruelty and punishing those guilty of them with all the severity of the law, cannot and must not, in face of those who are dying from hunger, hesitate to break down ruthlessly the resistance of the village usurers in giving up their corn. There must be no departure from this method, and there must be no mercy to those who are deaf to the groans of their starving brothers. The Workers' and Peasants' Republic can and must only proceed along the path of the strictest and most exact registration of all the available limited stocks of grain of a scientific distribution among those who need it, and of a ruthless suppression of the hosts of speculators, so-called sackmen, who are interfering with the work of distribution and are still more dislocating the means of transport. All who resist this policy, all who hesitate and delay adopting the most resolute means of fighting the famine, all those who fail to bend their entire energy in this fight, remaining indifferent to the sufferings of their brethren perishing from hunger, all these have no place in the ranks of the Soviet workers, in the ranks of those who fight for the Socialist Revolution.

The Fifth Congress of Soviets entirely approves of the investment of the People's Food Commissar with extraordinary powers for fighting the open enemies and *saboteurs* of the food policy of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, for the energetic and immediate reorganisation of the food committees in the grain-bearing provinces on the basis of their submission to the guidance of the central food authority and the representation of delegates from the food committees of grain-consuming localities on them, as indicated in the decrees of May 13 and 27, 1918. The measures undertaken by the People's Food Commissariat to monopolise the distribution of all articles of prime necessity and popular consumption, and to establish fixed prices for those articles in correspondence with the fixed grain prices, constitute a necessary complement to the policy of the Workers' and Peasants' Government in the matter of supplying bread to the localities which need it, and part of the entire Socialist policy of the Soviet regime. Only by relying upon the poor in the villages, only by organising them for the fight against the village bourgeoisie by means of special committees, only by carrying out through these committees a scientific and just distribution of grain, of agricultural implements and of articles of prime necessity, allowing in this connection special privileges for those who do not exploit other people's labour and do not profit by the famine for purposes of speculation, will the Workers' and Peasants' of the Soviet regime satisfy the daily needs of the average peasant, supply him with a just remuneration for the products of his heavy labour, overcome the violent resistance of the internal and external enemies of the Socialist Revolution, consolidate and extend it conquests and deliver Russia from the cruel food crisis which is the terrible inheritance of a four years' war and of the secular domination of landlords and capitalists, which has been rendered still more acute by the desperate fight against the Socialist Revolution on the part of all enemies of the working class and of the village poor fraternally united by the community of Socialist interests.

*Daily Review of the Foreign Press, Neutral Press Supplement*, September 6, 1918, pp. 370-371.

TROTSKY'S REPORT ON THE ARMY AND THE FIFTH CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS' RESOLUTION ON MILITARY MATTERS

July 10, 1918

*The problem of creating a new army in 1918 provoked bitter debates between Trotsky's vision of a centralized army based on conscription, appointed officers, and extensive use of "military specialists" from the old officer corps, and the revolutionary vision of a volunteer army with elected officers (reinforced by historic radical distrust of traditional forms of army organization and discipline). At the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets, Trotsky's report on the army provided the justification for the recent changes in the Bolshevik approach toward the army—conscription, abolition of election of officers, ranks—and new policies such as use of specialists. The Congress resolution made this official policy, although debate over some issues, especially use of former tsarist officers, continued, as Trotsky's continued defense of the practice shows (see later documents).*

TROTSKY'S REPORT

He said that the opponents of the Government had been reproaching it with taking up the organisation of the army after great delay and reluctance. As a matter of fact, however, the Bolsheviks had never been in favour of destroying or abolishing the army, and only advocated its reorganisation on a new democratic basis. The old army had disappeared, not because of the anti-militarist character of the Revolution, but because it had been organised on a class basis which could not be maintained after the Revolution. Again, the effect of the Revolution on the army had not consisted in introducing politics, because there was no army in the world which was free from politics, but in the revolt of the working class and peasantry against the capitalists and landlords from whom the officers had been recruited, and whose politics had dominated the army. So far from the Bolsheviks being responsible for the dissolution of the army, long before the Revolution delegates from regiments, divisions and whole armies would come to the Petrograd Soviet declaring that the army would leave the trenches on the fall of the first snow if peace were not concluded. If the army, nevertheless, had stayed in the trenches another three months, till February, that had been due to the enthusiasm aroused by the Bolshevik Revolution. It had, however, been impossible to reorganise the old army. The army had to be first dispersed and returned to its original villages before it could, after renovation, become available once more. Nor were the reproaches justified that the Bolsheviks had departed from their original principle of voluntary enlistment. The Bolsheviks had never been in favour of voluntarism such as had been practised before the war in England and the United States. The protection of one's country was a civic duty, and, in face of the bourgeois world, armed to the teeth by universal conscription, it would have been absurd on the part of Socialist Russia to rely upon volunteers. The principle of a voluntary army had only been adopted at the first critical stage of the existence of the Russian Republic, as a makeshift, to tide over the difficulties created by the dissolution of the old army and pending the construction of a new. As a matter of fact, the voluntary army, in spite of its enthusiasm, had proved a failure in the defence against the Germans. Therefore, as soon as it became possible, the Government had laid the foundations of new machinery by establishing a supreme organ of military organisation in the centre and subordinate military commissariats in provincial districts, arranged in a hierarchical order from town to village. Only by first creating such a machinery for the recruitment, formation and training of troops could a beginning be made in the reconstruction of the new army out of the old, which had in the meantime become rejuvenated by labour and contact with the rest of the people in the villages and towns. It must be admitted that the machinery was not yet completed. The commissariats, so far, only existed in some of the provinces, while in many districts, and especially in the villages, they were still lacking. Nor was the idea that each commissariat

was subordinate to the one above it in hierarchical order as yet entirely digested by the commissars themselves. There was a good deal of separatism in the military organisations, as there was in the organisation of the food supply. Yet without centralisation no army was possible. Of course, there were some, like the S.R.'s, who denied the need of an army, and advocated guerilla detachments, but that was the same as if people were to decide to discard railways, steamers and steam-ploughs, and to go back to transport by carts and sailing boats and to primitive ploughs. The time had passed for home-made remedies, and those who were afraid of centralism were simply obsessed by the old distrust of the Central Government, which they had inherited from the Tsarist and bureaucratic regime. The State was now in the hands of the formerly oppressed classes, and the central power at present exercised was the power of those classes. It was the duty of the new organisation to imbue the soldiers with a new conception of discipline based not upon blind obedience, but upon a clear conception of the aims and objects of national defence in its present form. The Revolution had awakened a sense of personality in the peasants and workers, and it was natural that that sense would at first assume anarchical and extreme individualistic forms. It was necessary that every worker and peasant, awakened to that sense, should also acquire the sense of the whole, and should realise that he was a conscious part of the conscious organism. The Government was further charged with confining military service only to the workers and peasants, but people forgot that they were living in a period of open civil war, a war of class against class, and that, whether such a war was good or bad, it was a fact which must be recognised. The workers and peasants were up in arms against the bourgeoisie, while the bourgeoisie hated the workers and peasants so deeply that they would prefer any foreign yoke to the domination of the formerly oppressed class. Hence it was the prime duty of the workers and peasants not to place any arms in the hands of the bourgeoisie, whose members would only be used for the formation of labour and auxiliary battalions. That might be a cruel ordeal for them, but they were of the opinion that until the young men from the bourgeoisie had proved their devotion to the working class and peasantry by sharing with them all dangers as well as the task of fighting the internal and external enemy they would have to submit to that ordeal. So far the first steps taken to mobilise the new army by summoning to the colours the contingents of the years 1896 and 1897 had, in Moscow, proved a brilliant success, the young workers rushing to the army in their thousands without any pressure whatever. The same was expected in the Northern district. The mobilisation of these two years would in due course be extended to the rest of the provinces, and then a decree would be issued making all citizens of the Republic between the ages of 18 and 40 liable to be called up to the colours for the protection of the Soviet Government at any moment. The greatest task, however, was the supply of officers, since the working class and the peasantry had as yet never had a chance of producing experts in the various branches connected with the army. That circumstance made it necessary to have recourse to the officers of the old army, just as they were obliged to have recourse to the guns, machine-guns and armoured cars which had formerly belonged to the Tsar's regime. Of course, there was a danger of treachery. But so it was in every other branch of administration, on the railways, in the banks and various Government offices, where they had been obliged to install specialists, who had formerly served the old regime. Such a risk was inevitable, and the only thing to do was to exercise a strict control over the movements of such experts. The War Commissariat was doing its best to expedite the formation of officers from the workers' ranks, by establishing military schools, and by opening their doors to the working class and peasantry. A successful beginning had already been made in this direction, and within less than a year Russia would have a considerable number of officers from the working class ranks, trained for various tasks, high and low. But in the meantime the old officers must be utilised, which can be done the more easily as a number of them have quite sincerely adhered to the new regime. Similarly difficult was the separatist tendencies, and perhaps the local patriotism of the provincial and district Soviets, which had

appropriated the property of the old army, and in many cases refused to give it up, thinking that by holding it they, at least, would secure their own safety. But that was a great mistake. The safety of every locality could be best protected by action from the centre, and all army property must be given up and kept by the central authorities.

#### RESOLUTION

(1) The Russian Soviet Republic is like a fortress besieged from all sides by Imperialist armies. Inside the Soviet fortress the counter-revolution is raising its head, having found temporary support in the Czecho-Slovak hirelings of the Anglo-French bourgeoisie. The Soviet Republic needs a strong revolutionary army, capable of crushing the counter-revolution of the bourgeoisie and landlords, and repelling the revolting Imperialist robbers.

(2) The old Tsarist Army, created by force to support the dominion of exploiters of the labouring classes, suffered a terrible *débauche* in the Imperialist slaughter of nations. It was finally killed by the lie of the Cadet and Coalitionist policy, by the criminal offensive of July 1, and by the adventures of Kerensky and Kornilov. Together with the old regime and the old army, the old machinery of military administration both in the centre and in the country went to pieces.

(3) In these circumstances the Workers' and Peasants' Government had in the first period of its existence no other way or means of creating an army than the enrollment of volunteers, who were prepared to rally to the banner of the Red Army.

(4) At the same time the Soviet Government always recognised—and the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets once more solemnly confirms it—that it is the duty of every honest and able-bodied citizen between 18 and 40 years of age to step forward at the first call of the Soviet Republic for its defence against external and internal enemies.

(5) With a view to carrying out compulsory military training and compulsory service, the Council of People's Commissars has established Soviet organs of local military administration in the form of regional, provincial, district, and *volost* military commissars. Approving as it does this reform, the All-Russian Congress of Soviets makes it the duty of all local Soviets to carry it out in strict accordance with the law, in their respective localities. The condition of the success of all measures to create an army is a consistent centralism in military administration, viz., a strict and absolute subordination of the *volost* to the district, of the district to the provincial, of the provincial to the regional, and of the regional commissariats to the People's Commissariat for War.

(6) The Fifth Congress of Soviets demands from all local institutions a strict account of military property, and its conscientious distribution and administration, according to the rules and regulations confirmed by the central organisation of Soviet Government. Arbitrary seizure of army property, hiding, unlawfully appropriating or dishonestly administering it must be considered as belonging to the category of gravest State crimes.

(7) The time for individual and chance formation of independent detachments must be regarded as passed. All formations must be carried out in strict accord with the instructions and plans of the All-Russian General Staff. The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army must be built up in such a way as to yield a maximum of results at a minimum expenditure of effort and means, and that is only possible through a scientific application of all the teaching of military science as prescribed by the experience of the present war.

(8) For the creation of the centralised, well-trained, and well-equipped army, it is necessary to make the widest use of the experience and knowledge of the numerous military specialists among the officers of the old army. They must all be registered and placed at the posts indicated to them by the Soviet Government. Every military specialist who honestly and conscientiously works for the development and consolidation of the military strength of the Soviet Republic is entitled to the respect of the Workers' and Peasants' Army, and the support of the Soviet Government. All military specialists, who would make the attempt

treacherously to use their responsible posts for counter-revolutionary conspiracy or treason in the interest of foreign Imperialists, must be punished by death.

(9) The military commissars are the guardians of the close and inviolable internal connection of the Red Army with the workers' and peasants' regime as a whole. Only revolutionaries beyond reproach, staunch fighters for the cause of the proletariat and village poor, must be appointed to the posts of military commissars.

(10) The most important problem in connection with the formation of the army is the training of a new class of officers, entirely animated by the ideas of the Workers' and Peasants' Revolution. The Congress enjoins upon the People's Commissar for War to redouble his efforts in this direction by creating a wide net of schools of instruction, and by attracting to them the ablest and most energetic and bravest soldiers of the Red Army.

(11) The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army must be built up on the bases of an iron revolutionary discipline. Citizens who have received arms from the Soviet Government for the defence of the interests of the labouring masses must implicitly obey the demands and orders of the commanders appointed by the Soviet Government. Hooligan elements who plunder and do violence to the local population, or foment mutinies, cowards and deserters who leave their posts, must be punished ruthlessly. The All-Russian Congress makes it incumbent upon the War Commissariat to hold responsible, in the first place, those commissars and commanders who connive at acts of lawlessness, or neglect to take notice of infractions of military duty.

(12) So long as the bourgeoisie has not been completely expropriated, and has not been subjected to universal labour service, so long as the bourgeoisie is aspiring to restore its former domination, its armament would mean the armament of an enemy who at any moment is prepared to betray the Soviet Republic into the hands of foreign Imperialists. The Congress confirms the decree of the Council of People's Commissars to create out of the members of the bourgeoisie of military ages reserves in the rear for the formation of labour and auxiliary service units. Only those bourgeois elements, who by their deeds have proved their loyalty to the labouring masses, may be promoted and transferred to the active service ranks.

(13) The Congress enjoins upon all Soviet bodies and all trade unions and factory organisations the duty of co-operating by all the means at their disposal with the military administration in the matter of the compulsory military training of all workers and all peasants who do not exploit hired labour. It is necessary to form everywhere rifle associations and shooting ranges, and to arrange for manoeuvres and military revolutionary parades, and intensive agitation for the promotion of interest in military affairs among the working-classes and peasantry.

(14) While welcoming the summoning to the colours of two annual contingents of all workers in Moscow and Petrograd, as well as the beginning of mobilisation on the Volga and in the Urals, the Congress, in view of the endeavour of the world's robbers to draw Russia once more into an Imperialistic slaughter, considers it necessary to effect a general mobilisation of several years' contingents of workers and labouring peasants throughout the country. The Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars are charged with issuing a decree, fixing the number and the age categories liable to be immediately summoned to the colours, as well as the dates and conditions of enrolment.

(15) Surrounded on all sides by enemies and standing face to face with a counter-revolution, supported by foreign mercenaries, the Soviet Republic will establish a strong army to protect the authority of the workers and peasants until such time as the European and world's working-classes, rising in revolt, inflict a mortal blow to militarism and bring about conditions for the peaceful and fraternal co-operation of all nations.

*Daily Review of the Foreign Press, Neutral Press Supplement, September 13, 1918, pp. 396-398.*

CONSTITUTION (FUNDAMENTAL LAW) OF THE  
RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERAL SOVIET REPUBLIC  
July 10, 1918

*The first constitution of the Soviet state set forth basic principles and outlined the political structure for the country. Part One is the "Declaration of the Rights of the Working and Exploited People," adopted January 12 (25), 1918 (see comment on its importance, above, January 12). The word "Socialist" came before "Soviet" in the Republic's name until the 1930s, when the two were reversed, creating the modern form.*

CONSTITUTION (FUNDAMENTAL LAW) OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST  
FEDERAL SOVIET REPUBLIC (RSFSR), RATIFIED BY THE FIFTH  
ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF SOVIETS ON JULY 10, 1918

The Declaration of the Rights of the Laboring and Exploited People, confirmed by the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets in January 1918, together with the constitution of the Soviet Republic, ratified by the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets, constitute the fundamental law of the RSFSR.

This fundamental law enters into force from the moment of its publication, in its final form, in the *Izvestiia* [official gazette] of the VTsIK. It must be reprinted by all the local organs of the soviets and displayed prominently in all public soviet institutions.

The Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets charges the People's Commissar for Education with the introduction into all schools and educational institutions, without exception, of the study of the basic principles of the present constitution and their explanation and interpretation.

SECTION ONE

DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE LABORING AND EXPLOITED PEOPLES  
CHAPTER I

1. Russia is declared a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. All central and local authority is vested in these soviets.

2. The Russian Soviet Republic is established on the basis of a free union of free nations, as a federation of national soviet republics.

CHAPTER II

3. With the fundamental aim of suppressing all exploitation of man by man, of abolishing forever the division of society into classes, of ruthlessly suppressing all exploiters, of bringing about the socialist organization of society and the triumph of socialism in all countries, the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies further decrees:

a. In order to establish the 'socialization' of land, private ownership of land is abolished; all land is declared national property, and is handed over to the laboring masses, without compensation, on the basis of an equitable division giving the right of use only.

b. All forests, underground mineral wealth, and waters of national importance, all live-stock and appurtenances, together with all model-farms and agricultural enterprises, are proclaimed public property.

c. As the first step towards the complete transfer of factories, works, shops, mines, railways, and other means of production and of transport to the ownership of the workers' and peasants' Soviet Republic, and in order to insure the supremacy of the laboring masses over the exploiters, the Congress ratifies the soviet law on workers' control of industry and that on the supreme soviet of people's economy.

d. The Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets considers the soviet law repudiating the loans contracted by the government of the Tsar, the landlords, and the bourgeoisie as a first blow at international financial capitalism; and it expresses its conviction that the Soviet

government will continue firmly in this direction until the complete victory of the international revolt of the workers against the yoke of capitalism.

e. The Congress ratifies the transfer of all banks to the ownership of the workers' and peasants' government as one of the conditions insuring the emancipation of the toiling masses from the capitalistic yoke.

f. In order to exterminate all parasitic strata of society and to organize the economic life of the country, general compulsory labor is introduced.

g. In order to secure the supremacy of the laboring masses and to guard against any possibility of the restoration of the power of the exploiters, the Congress decrees the arming of the laboring population, the formation of a socialist Red Army of workers and peasants, and the complete disarmament of the propertied classes.

#### CHAPTER III

4. The Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets, expressing its firm determination to deliver humanity from the claws of financial capital and imperialism, which, during this, the most criminal of all wars, have drenched the world with blood, whole-heartedly associates itself with the policy of the present soviet administration in its repudiation of the secret treaties, in organization of the widest possible fraternization between the workers and peasants in the ranks of the opposing armies, and in efforts to attain, at all cost, by revolutionary means, a democratic peace of the laboring masses without annexations of contributions, on the basis of a free self-determination of nations.

5. With the same object, the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets insists on the complete repudiation of the barbarous policy of the bourgeois civilization, which built up the prosperity of the exploiters in a few privileged nations on the enslavement of hundreds of millions of the laboring masses in Asia, in the colonies in general, and in the small countries.

6. The Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets cordially welcomes the policy of the Soviet of Peoples' Commissars (Sovnarkom) in proclaiming the independence of Finland, in beginning the withdrawal of the armies from Persia, and in granting the right of self-determination to Armenia.

#### CHAPTER IV

7. The Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies considers that now, at the decisive moment in the struggle of the proletariat against its exploiters, the latter can have no place in any of the organs of power. Power must appertain completely and exclusively to the laboring masses and their plenipotentiary representatives, the soviets of workers', soldiers', and peasants' deputies.

8. At the same time, striving to bring about a really free and voluntary, and, therefore, a more complete and lasting union of the laboring classes of all the nationalities of Russia, the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets confines itself to formulating the fundamental principles of the federation of the soviet republics of Russia, and leaves to the workers and peasants of each nationality the right to make an independent decision, at their own plenipotentiary congress of soviets, whether they desire, and if so upon what basis, to participate in the federal government and in other federal soviet institutions.

### SECTION TWO

#### GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE RSFSR

#### CHAPTER V

9. The principal object of the constitution of the RSFSR, which is adapted to the present transition period, consists in the establishment of the dictatorship of the urban and rural proletariat and the poorest peasantry, in the form of the strong all-Russian soviet power, with the aim of securing the complete suppression of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man, and the establishment of socialism, under which there shall be neither class division nor state authority.



10. The Russian Republic is a free socialist society of all the laboring people of Russia. All authority within the boundaries of the RSFSR is vested in the entire working population of the country, organized in the urban and rural soviets.

11. The soviets of regions which are distinguished by a particular national and territorial character may unite in autonomous regional unions, at the head of which, as well as at the head of all other regional federations which may be formed in general, stand the regional congresses of soviets and their executive organs. These autonomous regional unions enter into the RSFSR on a federal basis.

12. Supreme authority in the RSFSR is vested in the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and, in the interim between the congresses—in the VTsIK.

13. In order to secure for the laboring masses genuine freedom of conscience, the church is separated from the state and the school from the church, and freedom of religious and anti-religious propaganda is acknowledged to be the right of all citizens.

14. In order to secure for the laboring masses genuine freedom of expressing their opinion, the RSFSR annuls the dependency of the press upon capital and hands over to the working class and the poor peasants all the technical and material resources necessary for the publication of newspapers, pamphlets, books, and all other printed matter, and guarantees their free circulation throughout the country.

15. In order to guarantee to the laboring masses complete freedom of assembly, the RSFSR, recognizing the right of the citizens of the Soviet Republic freely to organize meetings, processions, etc., places at the disposal of the workers and of the poor peasantry all premises fit for public gatherings, together with their furniture, lighting, and heating.

16. In order to insure for the laboring masses full liberty of association, the RSFSR, after having destroyed the economic and political power of the propertied classes and having thus removed all obstacles which hitherto in bourgeois society prevented the workers and peasants from enjoying freedom of organization and action, lends to workers and poorer peasants all its material and moral assistance to help them to unite and to organize themselves.

17. In order to insure for the laboring masses effective access to education, the RSFSR undertakes to provide for the workers and poorest peasants complete, universal, and free education.

18. The RSFSR recognizes work to be the duty of all citizens of the republic and proclaims the watch-word: "He who does not work shall not eat."

19. In order to safeguard in every possible way the conquests of the great workers' and peasants' revolution, the RSFSR declares it the duty of all citizens of the republic to defend the socialist fatherland and establishes universal military service. The honor of bearing arms in defence of the revolution is granted only to the laboring masses; the non-laboring elements shall have other military duties to fulfill.

20. Recognizing the solidarity of the laboring masses of all nations, the RSFSR extends all political rights enjoyed by Russian citizens to foreigners working within the territory of the Russian Republic, provided that they belong to the working class or to the peasantry working without hired labor. It authorizes the local soviets to confer upon such foreigners the rights of Russian citizenship without any difficult formalities.

21. The RSFSR grants the right of asylum to all foreigners persecuted for political and religious offences.

22. The RSFSR, recognizing the equality of all citizens, irrespective of race or nationality, declares it contrary to the fundamental laws of the republic to institute or tolerate privileges, or any prerogative whatsoever, founded on such grounds, or to repress national minorities, or in any way to limit their rights.

23. Guided by the interests of the working class as a whole, the RSFSR deprives individuals or separate groups of any privileges which they may use to the detriment of the socialist revolution.

### SECTION THREE THE STRUCTURE OF SOVIET AUTHORITY

#### A. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CENTRAL AUTHORITY

#### CHAPTER VI—*The All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Red Army, and Cossacks' Deputies*

24. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets is the supreme organ of authority of the RSFSR.

25. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets is composed of representatives of city soviets on the basis of one deputy for each 25,000 electors, and of representatives of provincial congresses of soviets on the basis of one deputy for each 125,000 of the population.

Note 1. If a provincial congress of soviets has not been held before the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, delegates to the latter are sent direct from the country congresses of soviets.

Note 2. If a regional congress of soviets immediately precedes the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, delegates to the latter may be sent by the regional congress of soviets.

26. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets is convoked by the VTsIK at least twice a year.

27. An extraordinary All-Russian Congress of Soviets may be convoked by the VTsIK on its own decision, or on the demand of the local soviets which represent at least one-third of the total population of the republic.

28. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets elects the VTsIK consisting of not more than 200 members.

29. The VTsIK is responsible in all matters to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

30. In the interim between the congresses, the VTsIK is the supreme authority of the republic.

#### CHAPTER VII—*The All-Russian Central Executive Committee of Soviets (VTsIK)*

31. The VTsIK is the supreme legislative, administrative, and controlling organ of the RSFSR.

32. The VTsIK has general direction of the activity of the workers' and peasants' government and of all government organs throughout the country; unifies and co-ordinates legislative and administrative work; and supervises the application of the Soviet Constitution, the decrees of the All-Russian Congresses of Soviets, and the decisions of the central organs of government.

33. The VTsIK examines and ratifies drafts of decrees and other proposals submitted by the Sovnarkom or by individual departments; it also issues its own decrees and regulations.

34. The VTsIK convokes the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, to which it submits an account of its activity, together with statements on general policy and on various detailed questions.

35. The VTsIK appoints the Sovnarkom for the general direction of the affairs of the RSFSR, and likewise People's Commissariats for the direction of the various departments of administration.

36. The members of the VTsIK work in the departments (People's Commissariats), or undertake special work for the VTsIK.

#### CHAPTER VIII—*The Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom)*

37. The Sovnarkom has the general direction of the affairs of the RSFSR.

38. In realization of this duty the Sovnarkom issues decrees, orders, and instructions, and takes all general measures necessary to secure prompt and orderly administration.

39. The Sovnarkom immediately informs the VTsIK of all its orders and decisions.

40. The VTsIK has the right to annul or to suspend any decision or order of the Sovnarkom.

41. All orders and decisions of the Sovnarkom of general political significance must be submitted for examination and ratification by the VTsIK.

Note. Measures of extreme urgency may be put into force on the sole authority of the Sovnarkom.

42. The members of the Sovnarkom are in charge of the various People's Commissariats.

43. There are established eighteen People's Commissariats: (a) foreign affairs, (b) war, (c) navy, (d) interior, (e) justice, (f) labor, (g) social welfare, (h) education, (i) posts and telegraphs, (j) nationalities, (k) finance, (l) ways of communication, (m) agriculture, (n) trade and industry, (o) food, (p) state control, (q) Supreme Soviet of People's Economy, (r) health.

44. Attached to each People's Commissar and under his presidency is set up a collegium, the members of which are appointed by the Sovnarkom.

45. The People's Commissar has the right to make personal decisions on all questions within the competence of the corresponding commissariat. The collegium, or individual members thereof, without suspending the execution of the decision, may lodge a complaint against it with the Sovnarkom or with the presidium of the VTsIK. The same right of lodging complaints appertains also to individual members of the collegium.

46. The Sovnarkom is responsible in all matters to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and to the VTsIK.

47. People's Commissars and the collegia attached thereto are responsible in all matters to the Sovnarkom and the VTsIK.

48. The title of People's Commissar belongs exclusively to members of the Sovnarkom who administer the general affairs of the RSFSR, and can not be adopted by any other representative of the central or local authorities.

#### CHAPTER IX—*The Competence of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and the VTsIK*

49. Within the competence of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and the VTsIK fall all questions of national importance, namely:

a. The ratification, alteration, and supplementing of the constitution of the RSFSR.  
b. The general direction of the external and internal policy of the RSFSR.  
c. The delimitation and alteration of frontiers, with power to detach any territories of the RSFSR, or to abandon the rights of the republic in respect thereof.

d. The establishment of the boundaries and competence of regional unions of soviets which are part of the RSFSR and arbitration in disputes which may arise amongst them.

e. The admission of new members into the composition of the RSFSR and the recognition of the severance of those parts which have left the Russian federation.

f. The determination of the administrative divisions of the RSFSR and the ratification of regional unions.

g. The establishment and modification of the system of weights and measures and coinage on the territory of the RSFSR.

h. Relations with foreign powers, declaration of war, and conclusion of peace.

i. The floating of loans, negotiation of tariff, commercial, and financial agreements.

j. The establishment of a basis and of general outlines for the economic life, both as a whole and in its separate branches, of the RSFSR.

k. The adoption of the budget of the RSFSR.

l. The levying of taxes and imposition of public duties.

m. The establishment of the basis of organization of the armed forces of the RSFSR.

n. Legislation, the organization of the judicature, of civil and criminal jurisdiction, etc.

o. The appointment and recall both of the individual members and of the entire Sovnarkom and the confirmation of the appointment of the president of the Sovnarkom.

p. The publication of general regulations concerning the acquisition or loss of civil rights by Russian citizens, and also the rights of foreigners within the territory of the republic.

q. The right of general or partial amnesty.

50. In addition to the above-enumerated questions, the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and the VTsIK may decide on any other matter which they deem within their jurisdiction.

51. Within the exclusive jurisdiction of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets fall:

a. The drafting, supplementing, and amending the fundamental principles of the Soviet Constitution.

b. The ratification of peace treaties.

52. The settlement of questions enumerated in paragraphs "c" and "h" of article 49 falls within the jurisdiction of the VTsIK only when it is impossible to convoke the All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

## B. THE ORGANIZATION OF LOCAL SOVIET AUTHORITY

### CHAPTER X—*The Congresses of Soviets*

53. The congresses of soviets are composed as follows:

a. Regional—of representatives of city soviets and of county congresses of soviets: in the case of the latter on the basis of one deputy for each 25,000 of the population, and in the case of the former one deputy for each 5,000 electors, with a maximum of 500 deputies for the entire region; or of deputies from the provincial congresses of soviets, elected on the same basis in case the latter congress is convoked immediately before the regional congress of soviets.

b. Provincial—of representatives of city soviets and rural district congresses of soviets: in the case of the latter on the basis of one deputy for each 10,000 of the population and in the case of the former of one deputy for each 2,000 electors, with a maximum of 300 deputies for the whole province. If the county congress of soviets is convoked immediately before the provincial congress, the election takes place on the same basis, not by the rural district congress, but by the county congress.

c. County—of representatives of the village soviets on the basis of one deputy for each 1,000 of the population with a maximum of 300 deputies for the county.

d. Rural district—of representatives of all village soviets of the rural districts on the basis of one deputy for every ten members of the soviet.

Note 1. In the county congresses of soviets are represented the soviets of those cities whose population does not exceed 10,000 inhabitants. Soviets of villages of less than 1,000 inhabitants meet together to elect deputies to the county congress.

Note 2. Village soviets of less than ten members send one deputy to the rural district congress.

54. Congresses of soviets are convoked by territorially corresponding executive organs of soviet authority (executive committees) at the discretion of the latter, or upon the demand of the soviets of those localities which represent at least one-third of the entire population of the given district, but in every case not less than twice a year for the regions, once every three months for the provinces and counties, and once every month for rural districts.

55. The congress of soviets (regional, provincial, county, rural district) elects its executive organ—executive committees—with a membership not greater than (a) for the regions and provinces, 25; (b) for counties, 20; (c) for rural districts, 10. The executive committee is responsible in all matters to the congress of soviets which elected it.

56. The congress of soviets (regional, provincial, county, rural district) is, within its competence, the supreme authority throughout the given territory; in the interim between the congresses the supreme authority is vested in the executive committee.

### CHAPTER XI—*Soviets of Deputies*

57. Soviets of deputies are elected as follows:

a. In the cities, one deputy for each 1,000 of the population, with a minimum of 50 and a maximum of 1,000 members.

b. In the townships (farms, hamlets, villages, encampments, small towns with a population of less than 10,000, mountain valleys, etc.)—one deputy for each 100 of the population, with a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 50 deputies for each locality. Deputies are elected for a period of three months.

Note. In rural localities, wherever it may be possible, questions of administration will be settled directly by the general assembly of the electors of the village concerned.

58. For the transaction of current affairs the soviet of deputies elects from amongst its members an executive committee composed, in the villages, of not more than 5 members, and in the townships, of one deputy for each 50 persons, with a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 15. (In Petrograd and Moscow the maximum is 40.) The executive committee is responsible in all matters to the soviet which elected it.

59. The soviet of deputies is convoked by the executive committee on the initiative of the latter, or upon the demand of at least half of the members of the soviet, at least once a week in the towns and twice a week in the townships.

60. The soviet, within the limits of its administration or in the case described in the note to Article 57, the general assembly of electors constitutes the supreme authority for its locality.

#### CHAPTER XII—*The Competence of the Local Organs of Soviet Authority*

61. Regional, provincial, county, and rural district organs of soviet authority, as well as the village soviets, have the following functions within their jurisdiction:

- a. Carrying out of all instructions issued by the corresponding supreme organs of soviet authority.
- b. Adoption of all appropriate measures for developing the cultural and economic life of their territory.
- c. Settlement of all questions of purely local interest for the given territory.
- d. Unification of all soviet activities throughout the given territory.

62. The congresses of soviets and their executive committees have the right of control over the activities of the local soviets: *i.e.*, the regional congress exercises control over all the soviets in its region, the provincial—over all soviets of the given province, except over the city soviets which do not enter into the composition of the county congresses of soviets. The regional provincial congresses of soviets, together with their executive committees, have the further right to repeal the decisions of the district soviets. In the more important cases they must inform the central soviet authority of these measures.

63. In order to insure the execution of the duties incumbent upon the organs of soviet authority, there are created, in connection with every soviet (city and village) and every executive committee (regional, provincial, county, and rural district), the corresponding departments, under the charge of departmental managers.

### SECTION FOUR

#### CHAPTER XIII—*Electoral Rights*

64. The right to vote and to be elected to the soviets belongs to all following citizens of the RSFSR irrespective of sex, religion, or nationality, and without any residential qualification: provided that on the day of the election they have reached the age of eighteen:

- a. All citizens gaining their livelihood by productive work useful to society, as well as persons engaged in domestic pursuits which enable the former to follow their callings, namely: workers and employees of all kinds and categories engaged in industry, trade, agriculture, etc., peasants, and laboring cossacks, who do not use hired labor for private gain.
- b. Soldiers of the soviet army and navy.

c. All citizens included in the categories indicated in paragraphs (a) and (b) of the present article who are incapacitated for work.

Note 1. The local soviet may, upon the approval of the central authority, reduce the legal age fixed by this paragraph.

Note 2. In addition to Russian citizens, persons mentioned in article 20 (second section, chapter V), also enjoy electoral rights.

65. The following persons have neither the right to vote nor the right to be elected, even if they are included within one of the above-mentioned categories:

- a. Persons employing hired labor for the sake of profit.
- b. Persons living on an income not derived from their own labor, such as: interest on capital, income from industrial enterprises, landed property, etc.
- c. Private business men, trade and commercial agents.
- d. Monks and clergymen of all religious denominations.
- e. Employees and agents of the former police, of the special gendarme-corps and secret police, and members of the former ruling dynasty of Russia.
- f. Persons legally recognized as mentally deranged or imbecile, as well as those under guardianship.
- g. Persons convicted of infamous or mercenary crimes for a period fixed by law or by judicial sentence.

#### CHAPTER XIV—*Electoral Procedure*

- 66. Elections are conducted according to established practice on dates fixed by the local soviets.
- 67. Elections take place in the presence of an electoral commission and a representative of the local soviet.
- 68. In cases where the presence of a representative of the soviet authority is technically impossible, his place is taken by the chairman of the electoral commission, and, in his absence, by the chairman of the electoral assembly.
- 69. A protocol on the proceedings and the result of elections is drawn up and signed by the members of the electoral commission and by the representative of the local soviet.
- 70. Details of electoral procedure, as well as the participation of trade union or other labor organizations therein are determined by the local soviets, in conformity with instructions issued by the VTsIK.

#### CHAPTER XV—*Of the Verification and Annulment of Elections and Recall of Deputies*

- 71. All material concerning the elections is handed over to the corresponding soviet.
- 72. The electoral results are examined by a credentials commission appointed by the soviet.
- 73. This commission reports to the soviet on the results of its examination.
- 74. The soviet decides as to the validity of a deputy's mandate in case of a dispute.
- 75. In case of the invalidation of any candidate, the soviet calls a new election.
- 76. In case of irregularity of the elections as a whole, the question of its annulment is decided by the immediately superior organ of soviet authority.
- 77. The VTsIK is the final court of appeal.
- 78. The electors have the right to recall at any time their delegates to the soviet, and to proceed with new elections according to the general statute.

### SECTION FIVE

#### CHAPTER XVI—*Of the Budget Law*

- 79. The financial policy of the RSFSR during the preparatory period of the dictatorship of the laboring masses promotes the fundamental aim towards the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the creation of conditions for the universal equality of all citizens of the republic in the production and distribution of wealth. To this end it aims at placing at the disposal of the organs of soviet authority all the resources necessary to satisfy the local and national needs of the soviet republic, encroaching without hesitation upon the rights of private property.
- 80. The state revenue and expenditure of the RSFSR are embodied in the general state budget.
- 81. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets or the VTsIK assesses taxation, determines the sources of public revenue, and supervises its distribution between the state and local soviets.
- 82. The soviets shall levy taxes and duties exclusively for the needs of local economy. Needs of a general and national character are met by grants from the state treasury.

83. No expenditure shall be made from the funds of the state treasury without an authorized credit in the state budget or without a corresponding special order by the central authority.

84. The credits necessary to meet the needs of state importance are opened to local soviets at the state treasury by order of the corresponding people's commissariats.

85. All credits granted by the state treasury to the soviets, as well as credits allocated by local estimates for purely local requirements, must be applied in accordance with their direct assignment (paragraphs and clauses) laid down in the estimates; and they shall not be diverted to any other purpose without a special decision of the VTsIK and the Sovnarkom.

86. The local soviets prepare half-yearly and yearly estimates of income and expenditure for local needs. The estimates of village, rural district, and city soviets participating in the county congresses of soviets, together with the estimates of the county organs of soviet authority, are ratified by the respective provincial and regional congresses or by their executive committees. The estimates of the city, provincial, and regional soviet authorities are ratified by the VTsIK and Sovnarkom.

87. Supplementary credits for expenses not provided for in the estimates, as well as in case of insufficiency of the budgetary appropriations, are demanded by the soviets from the corresponding People's Commissariats.

88. Should local resources prove insufficient for the local needs, subsidies or loans from the resources of the state treasury necessary for converging urgent expenditure are granted to the local soviets by the VTsIK and the Sovnarkom.

#### SECTION SIX

#### CHAPTER XVII—*The Emblem and Flag of the RSFSR*

89. The emblem of the RSFSR consists of a golden sickle and hammer, placed upon a red background in the rays of the sun, the handles crossed and turned downwards: the whole surrounded by a wreath of ears of corn, with the inscription:

- a. "Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic", and
- b. "Proletarians of all countries, unite".

90. The commercial, naval, and military flag of the RSFSR consists of red (scarlet) cloth on the upper left corner of which, near the staff, are placed the golden letters: "RSFSR.", or the inscription: "Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic".

Batsell, pp. 81-95, with modifications by the editor.



#### THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ON ALLIED INTERVENTION

July 17, 1918

*The American government had been reluctant to sanction intervention (see July 2, 1918, above). The U.S. rejected many of the assumptions of the Supreme War Council's resolution, but did agree to intervention for more limited purposes.*

The Secretary of State to the Allied Ambassadors

*Aide-Mémoire*

The whole heart of the people of the United States is in the winning of this war. The controlling purpose of the Government of the United States is to do everything that is necessary and effective to win it. It wishes to cooperate in every practicable way with the Allied

Governments, and to cooperate ungrudgingly; for it has no ends of its own to serve and believes that the war can be won only by common counsel and intimate concert of action. It has sought to study every proposed policy or action in which its cooperation has been asked in this spirit, and states the following conclusions in the confidence that, if it finds itself obliged to decline participation in any undertaking or course of action, it will be understood that it does so only because it deems itself precluded from participating by imperative considerations either of policy or of fact.

In full agreement with the Allied Governments and upon the unanimous advice of the Supreme War Council, the Government of the United States adopted, upon its entrance into the war, a plan for taking part in the fighting on the western front into which all its resources of men and material were to be put, and put as rapidly as possible, and it has carried out that plan with energy and success, pressing its execution more and more rapidly forward and literally putting into it the entire energy and executive force of the nation. This was its response, its very willing and hearty response, to what was the unhesitating judgment alike of its own military advisers and of the advisers of the Allied Governments. It is now considering, at the suggestion of the Supreme War Council, the possibility of making very considerable additions even to this immense program which, if they should prove feasible at all, will tax the industrial processes of the United States and the shipping facilities of the whole group of associated nations to the utmost. It has thus concentrated all its plans and all its resources upon this single absolutely necessary object.

In such circumstances it feels it to be its duty to say that it cannot, so long as the military situation on the western front remains critical, consent to break or slacken the force of its present effort by diverting any part of its military force to other points or objectives. The United States is at a great distance from the field of action on the western front; it is at a much greater distance from any other field of action. The instrumentalities by which it is to handle its armies and its stores have at great cost and with great difficulty been created in France. They do not exist elsewhere. It is practicable for her to do a great deal in France; it is not practicable for her to do anything of importance or on a large scale upon any other field. The American Government, therefore, very respectfully requests its associates to accept its deliberate judgment that it should not dissipate its force by attempting important operations elsewhere.

It regards the Italian front as closely coordinated with the western front, however, and is willing to divert a portion of its military forces from France to Italy if it is the judgment and wish of the Supreme Command that it should do so. It wishes to defer to the decision of the Commander in Chief in this matter, as it would wish to defer in all others, particularly because it considers these two fronts so closely related as to be practically but separate parts of a single line and because it would be necessary that any American troops sent to Italy should be subtracted from the number used in France and be actually transported across French territory from the ports now used by the armies of the United States.

It is the clear and fixed judgment of the Government of the United States, arrived at after repeated and very searching reconsiderations of the whole situation in Russia, that military intervention there would add to the present sad confusion in Russia rather than cure it, injure her rather than help her, and that it would be of no advantage in the prosecution of our main design, to win the war against Germany. It can not, therefore, take part in such intervention or sanction it in principle. Military intervention would, in its judgment, even supposing it to be efficacious in its immediate avowed object of delivering an attack upon Germany from the east, be merely a method of making use of Russia, not a method of serving her. Her people could not profit by it, if they profited by it at all, in time to save them from their present distresses, and their substance would be used to maintain foreign armies, not to reconstitute their own. Military action is admissible in Russia, as the Government of the United States sees the circumstances, only to help the Czecho-Slovaks consolidate their forces and get into successful cooperation with their Slavic kinsmen and to steady any



efforts at self-government or self-defense in which the Russians themselves may be willing to accept assistance. Whether from Vladivostok or from Murmansk and Archangel, the only legitimate object for which American or Allied troops can be employed, it submits, is to guard military stores which may subsequently be needed by Russian forces and to render such aid as may be acceptable to the Russians in the organization of their own self-defense. For helping the Czecho-Slovaks there is immediate necessity and sufficient justification. Recent developments have made it evident that that is in the interest of what the Russian people themselves desire, and the Government of the United States is glad to contribute the small force at its disposal for that purpose. It yields, also, to the judgment of the Supreme Command in the matter of establishing a small force at Murmansk, to guard the military stores at Kola, and to make it safe for Russian forces to come together in organized bodies in the north. But it owes it to frank counsel to say that it can go no further than these modest and experimental plans. It is not in a position, and has no expectation of being in a position, to take part in organized intervention in adequate force from either Vladivostok or Murmansk and Archangel. It feels that it ought to add, also, that it will feel at liberty to use the few troops it can spare only for the purposes here stated and shall feel obliged to withdraw those forces, in order to add them to the forces at the western front, if the plans in whose execution it is now intended that they should cooperate should develop into others inconsistent with the policy to which the Government of the United States feels constrained to restrict itself.

At the same time the Government of the United States wishes to say with the utmost cordiality and good will that none of the conclusions here stated is meant to wear the least color of criticism of what the other governments associated against Germany may think it wise to undertake. It wishes in no way to embarrass their choices of policy. All that is intended here is a perfectly frank and definite statement of the policy which the United States feels obliged to adopt for herself and in the use of her own military forces. The Government of the United States does not wish it to be understood that in so restricting its own activities it is seeking, even by implication, to set limits to the action or to define the policies of its associates.

It hopes to carry out the plans for safeguarding the rear of the Czecho-Slovaks operating from Vladivostok in a way that will place it and keep it in close cooperation with a small military force like its own from Japan, and if necessary from the other Allies, and that will assure it of the cordial accord of all the Allied powers; and it proposes to ask all associated in this course of action to unite in assuring the people of Russia in the most public and solemn manner that none of the governments uniting in action either in Siberia or in northern Russia contemplates any interference of any kind with the political sovereignty of Russia, any intervention in her internal affairs, or any impairment of her territorial integrity either now or hereafter, but that each of the associated powers has the single object of affording such aid as shall be acceptable, and only such aid as shall be acceptable, to the Russian people in their endeavor to regain control of their own affairs, their own territory, and their own destiny.

It is the hope and purpose of the Government of the United States to take advantage of the earliest opportunity to send to Siberia a commission of merchants, agricultural experts, labor advisers, Red Cross representatives, and agents of the Young Men's Christian Association accustomed to organizing the best methods of spreading useful information and rendering educational help of a modest sort, in order in some systematic manner to relieve the immediate economic necessities of the people there in every way for which opportunity may open. The execution of this plan will follow and will not be permitted to embarrass the military assistance rendered in the rear of the westward-moving forces of the Czecho-Slovaks.

WASHINGTON, July 17, 1918.

*Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918, Russia, II, pp. 287-289.*

THE DEMOCRATIC COUNTERREVOLUTION  
THE COMMITTEE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY  
July 25, 1918

*Although the organized opposition to the Bolsheviks in the Civil War—collectively dubbed the “Whites”—is generally thought of as being politically conservative and dominated by military officers, the early opposition was more diverse. Some was based on the democratic center and non-Bolshevik socialist left. Perhaps the most important of these was the Committee of Members of the Constituent Assembly (Komuch), composed of Socialist Revolutionaries, which based itself on the authority of the Constituent Assembly in its claims to be a government for Russia. Centered in the Volga River city of Samara, it was able to form in the aftermath of the Czechoslovak seizure of the city (see above, May 20, 1918). It scored some victories and expanded its territories before the experiment in democratic opposition collapsed, not the least because of inherent tensions between the socialist political leaders and more conservative army officers.*

The Soviet regime is overthrown and Bolshevism suffered complete defeat on all the territory which is now subordinated to the Committee of Members of the All-Russian Constituent Assembly. Nevertheless there are still not a few people who dream of a return of the Soviet regime. These persons, together with the dregs of the population, energetically stir up the workers and peasants against the new Government, exploiting their inadequate knowledge and capacity for organization. These agitators suggest to them that the workers will again be under the power of capital and that the peasants will be deprived of the land and subjected to the landlords.

The Committee, regarding such agitation as clearly provocative, states that there is absolutely no basis for it and, in order to put an end to such malicious inventions, makes the following general declaration:

1. The land has once for all passed into the possession of the people and the Committee will not permit any attempts to return it to the landlords. The purchase, sale and mortgaging of agricultural land and of forests are forbidden, and secret and fictitious deals are declared invalid. Those who are guilty of violating this rule will be liable to the strictest responsibility.

2. The existing laws and decisions about the protection of labor preserve their force until they are revised in legislative order.

3. The Department of Labor, which has now replaced the Commissariat for Labor, is strictly instructed to watch out vigilantly for the execution of these laws and decisions and the judicial and examining authorities are instructed immediately to investigate and settle cases of the violation of labor laws.

4. Workers and peasants are requested to defend their interests only by legal means, in order to avoid anarchy and chaos.

5. Dismissal of workers and stoppage of the work of undertakings, if not justified by the conditions of production, or if undertaken by the employers in concert as a means of struggle with the workers or with the Government, are forbidden under pain of severest liability to punishment.

6. Enterprises may only be shut down with the permission of the state organizations which are supervising economic life (Councils of National Economy or Economic Councils).

7. The Department of Labor is commissioned to create appropriate organizations for the protection of labor in provincial and in county-seat towns.

8. The rights of trade-unions, as defined by law, preserve their force until the legal provisions are revised. Representatives of the workers and of the employers must be invited to participate in the preparation for a reëxamination of the laws about the protection of labor.

9. Collective agreements must preserve their validity until they are set aside by an agreement of the parties or until the laws affecting these agreements are revised.

Having in mind, at the same time, the interests of industry and of the economic life of the country, which has been completely shattered by the Bolsheviki, and desiring to coöperate with those better representatives of the commercial and industrial classes who honestly desire the recovery of the Motherland and who wish to promote the reëstablishment of normal economic life, the Committee of Members of the Constituent Assembly also considers it a duty to declare, for general knowledge:

1. The employers possess the right to demand from the workers intensive and efficient labor during all the working time which is prescribed by law and contract and to dismiss those workers who do not submit to these demands, observing the appropriate legal rules.

2. The employers possess the right to dismiss superfluous workers, observing the laws and rulings which have been established in this connection.

President of the Committee, Volsky,

Members of the Committee:

N. Shmelev, I Nesterov, P. Belozеров,

I. Brushvit, P. Klimushin and V. Abramov.

Chamberlin, Vol. 2, pp. 470-471. See Permissions page.



# A SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARY AND MENSHEVIK MANIFESTO AGAINST THE BOLSHEVIKS

July 29, 1918

*The Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary parties had, as noted earlier, great difficulty in determining a policy toward the new government; some worked with it, some opposed it by force of arms, while yet others sought some ground in between. The latter took their case to Western public opinion, especially socialist, in an effort to force change on the Bolsheviki. They were especially dismayed at the willingness of many Western socialists to overlook Bolshevik repressive policies. Here two prominent Russian socialists, Paul Axelrod, a Menshevik, and Nikolai Rusanov, a Socialist Revolutionary, outlined the complaints of Russian socialists against the Bolshevik government and sought Western socialist support.*

At the beginning of November last year the Bolsheviki completed their sanguinary *coup d'état* for "peace, bread and freedom," and from the very first moment of their attaining to power they set themselves to destroy all the seeds of democratic order and robbed the Russian people of its young freedom. While they inscribed on their banner the completion of Socialism, in all parts of the country they annihilated industry and undermined the very foundations of national production in such a way that, instead of the promised bread, Russia now sees before her the frightful spectre of universal famine.

They dismissed the army without waiting for the conclusion of a treaty of peace, and thus depriving the country of its means of defence they made it a prey for triumphant German Imperialism and hence delayed for long months mankind's march towards a general peace.

They persecuted mercilessly all those other Socialist parties who strove to lead the labouring masses into the path of creative democratic and Socialist work, and to make it

possible for them to give expression, rightly and freely, to their wishes. With the help of unheard-of measures of oppression and merciless terrorism, they prevent the completion of this great work of order and freedom. They forbid or suppress all Socialist papers, annihilate all public organisations, disband unions, cut down workers at meetings and demonstrations; they send organised, armed expeditions against the peasants. In the name of these self-same workers and peasants they drench Russia's cities and villages with the blood of the working people.

At the present moment, when the overwhelming majority of the proletariat and the peasants have not only deserted the Bolsheviks, but are filled with such a hatred of their oppressors that it is no longer possible to keep them back from an armed rising against the tyranny of the Bolsheviks, it is in this tragic moment that we address to the Socialist International of the whole world the following declaration:

An immense number of our comrades in Western Europe receive with deep distrust the charges which we make against the Bolsheviks. Thus sanction is given to their misdeeds, and moral support to their rule, which is founded on arbitrariness and unbounded oppression and raises the masses of the workers and peasants against it.

Through the delegates for the factories and workshops of Petrograd, the advance guard of the Russian proletariat raises its voice:

"Our life is a hell. Our children die of hunger. The starving get bullets instead of bread, and each and all who complain openly are branded as enemies of the people. Freedom of speech is suppressed. We can give expression to our desires or aims neither in speech nor writing. Our organisations are persecuted. Strikes are forbidden. The administration of justice, even of an elementary kind, does not exist, nor is there any law. We are ruled by men who rule as autocrats, and in whom we cannot have the slightest confidence; they have neither faith nor honour, and have betrayed and sold us so as to retain their power."

And yet all these terrors of Bolshevik rule are told in the Socialist Press of Western Europe as trumped-up tales, and the unmistakable expressions of indignation among the masses of our people and our Socialist parties are treated under the heading: Counter-revolution.

We, therefore, consider it to be our duty to draw the earnest attention of our comrades of Western Europe to this serious error, which may have fatal consequences, and we propose to them that an international commission of inquiry be set up, including representatives of all Socialist parties and including trustworthy interpreters, who would be able on the spot to furnish clear information as to the following points:

1. Are we right—yes or no—when we declare that the Bolshevik Government has degenerated into counter-revolution, having in its midst dire forces of the most unmistakable character; that the Government, although it hides behind the words "the will of the workers and peasants," does not in reality shrink from oppression of, and reprisals on, the workers and peasants, who are thus brought to the edge of an abyss and driven to an extreme of bitterness by the whole policy of the Soviet Power?

2. Are we right—yes or no—when we declare that the Bolshevik Government has now no other aim than to preserve its own power at all costs, and that to gain this object it is ready to sacrifice all the conquests of the Revolution and take refuge in a system of unbridled terrorism, directed, not against the "bourgeoisie," but against the other Socialist parties and the mass of the proletariat and peasants whom they represent; and that, finally, the Bolsheviks, eager to justify themselves in the eyes of the foreign conqueror, have not hesitated to lay at his feet the bodies of 200 Revolutionary Socialists who but yesterday were their allies and co-rulers?

3. Are we right—yes or no—when we declare that Bolshevism has done nothing positive for the establishment of Socialism, and that all its work has resulted in nothing but the total destruction of industry, has achieved the ruin of the business life of the country, together with universal unemployment and starvation?

4. Are we right—yes or no—when we declare that the Bolshevik Government deprives us of every possibility to carry on our work of agitation and organisation openly, and to fight with lawful means for that which we consider the one and only hope of salvation for Russia, namely, the summoning of a Constituent Assembly and the re-establishment of organs of local administration—in a word, the placing of all power in the hands of the people?

5. And, on the other hand, are the Bolsheviks right—yes or no—when they assert that all the other Russian Socialist parties are seeking, not to free the working classes from the despotic oppression of the minority, but to bring about the triumph of the counter-revolution in concert with “bourgeois” and monarchist elements?

In approaching the International with the proposal to form a commission of inquiry, we state openly that we resort to this solution from concern for the honour and the fate of the International. We consider the situation that has been created by influential sections of the international Labour movement, without having made the slightest effort to obtain satisfactory information and relying merely on an exceptionally biased source of information, is absolutely insufferable. We consider it intolerable that they should give their moral support to the anti-democratic policy of the Bolsheviks, and become involuntary accomplices in an unprecedented historical crime; the attempt to cover with the banner of Socialism the establishment of anarchist despotism. Again and again have the Socialist parties of Russia proposed to the Bolsheviks that the dispute should be settled in a peaceable and democratic manner by an appeal to the working classes in the form of a referendum or by a new election for a Constituent Assembly. But the stubborn refusal of the Bolsheviks to come to an agreement with the other Socialist parties and the no less stubborn prosecution of a policy of sheer dictatorship have created a situation from which, as was the case under Tsarism, there is no way out except by the forcible overthrow of Bolshevik power.

It must not come to pass that the International should take upon itself the responsibility of strengthening the Bolsheviks' position by its moral authority, and, by weakening the Socialist opposition to Bolshevism, be the indirect means of helping the reactionary elements to bring about the liquidation of Bolshevism in their own interests, which are in every respect inimical to Democracy, the Revolution and Socialism.

We are fully convinced that the International, inspired by its responsibility for the fate of the Russian Revolution, will spare no effort nor sacrifice that may be necessary to form a commission of inquiry and to send it to Russia. Thus it will fulfil a duty not only to the Russians, but to the international proletariat.

For the Social Democratic Party in Russia:

Paul Axelrod

For the Socialist Revolutionary Party in Russia:

Nicholas Rusanov

*Daily Review of the Foreign Press, Neutral Press Supplement, August 16, 1918.*



## OPEN ADMISSION TO UNIVERSITIES AND HIGHER EDUCATION

August 2, 1918

*As part of the effort to change the character of higher education, and especially to get more students of a proletarian background enrolled, the government removed all educational and other (except age) requirements for admission to universities. This did not have the desired*

result, although it did broaden the social base of students somewhat and contributed to the overall effort to change the universities (where the professorate generally opposed the new regime, even refusing to deal with its representatives in some instances). The government also increased the number of universities and undertook an attack on the tenure of the professors.

#### ADMISSION TO HIGHER INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING

1. Any person, regardless of citizenship or sex, who is sixteen years of age may be admitted to any of the higher institutions of learning without presenting a diploma or certificate of graduation from a secondary or any other school.

2. To require that the candidate present any credentials other than an identification card is forbidden.

3. All higher institutions of learning in the Republic, on the basis of the resolution "on the introduction of obligatory coeducation" in all educational institutions, are accessible to all, regardless of sex, in conformity with the degree on coeducation. Violators of this provision are subject to criminal prosecution by the Revolutionary Tribunal.

4. Admissions of first-year students (for 1918-1919) already made on the basis of either school certificates or competitive examinations are hereby declared void. New entrance conditions, conforming to the demands of the general statutes on higher institutions of learning which are now under consideration, will be published not later than September 1 of this year.

5. Tuition fees in higher educational institutions of the R.S.F.S.R. are henceforth abolished. Tuition fees already paid for the first half of the academic year 1918-1919 shall be refunded accordingly.

Bunyan, *Intervention, Civil War and Communism*, pp. 534-535, and *Sobranie zakoneni i resporiazhenii*, No. 57, 1918, p. 689.



#### FOOD REQUISITION DETACHMENTS

August 4, 1918

*Food requisitioning detachments were important features of Russian life in 1918. These were organized mainly in the cities, especially the industrial cities of the north, to requisition grain from the peasantry, especially in the southerly regions. They had already commenced work in the spring, but this decree formally authorized their activity in connection with the upcoming harvest and attempted to regulate them. See also the decree on food procurement, above, May 13, 1918, and the activity of the detachments, August 20, below.*

1. All guberniya and uezd Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, all committees of the poor, all trade union organizations of workers, together with the local organs of the People's Commissariats of Food and Agriculture are to form immediately harvesting and grain requisition detachments. Detachments of workers and peasants from starving guberniyas, sent to requisition grain, are to help in bringing in the new harvest. Form immediately new detachments from among local peasants and workers to carry out these tasks.

2. The tasks of the above-mentioned detachments are:

(a) Harvest winter grain in former landlord owned estates;

- (b) Harvest grain in front line areas;
- (c) Harvest grain on the land of notorious *kulaks* and rich people;
- (d) Help in harvesting grain in good time everywhere and in the transfer of all surpluses to state storehouses.

3. All grain, collected by harvesting and grain requisition detachments, is to be distributed on the following basis: firstly, of course, the necessary amount of grain to satisfy the need for food of the poorest strata of the local population is to be distributed. This part of the grain collected is not to be removed but to remain at the local level. All other grain is to be immediately and unconditionally delivered to grain collection centres. The distribution of this grain is to be carried out by the *guberniya* food committees on the instructions of the People's Commissariat of Food.

4. Members of harvesting and food requisition detachments, if they are not being rewarded according to previously published decrees (e.g. the decree on the maintenance of volunteer workers, going to the front and in food detachments, their localities and average earnings) are to be rewarded, firstly, by an allowance *in natura*; secondly, by payment in cash according to local conditions and; thirdly, by special bonuses for successful and rapid fulfilment of harvesting work and the transfer of grain to storage centres. The extent of rewards and bonuses are to be determined by *guberniya* food committees on the basis of instructions from the Commissariat of Food.

MacCauley, p. 249-250.



### TROTSKY'S ASSESSMENT OF THE RED ARMY

August 15, 1918

*The fighting capacity of the new Red Army was one of the main problems of 1918. Here Trotsky analyzes it within the specific context of the siege of Kazan, the fight for which was the crucible out of which the Red Army took form. He found the troops good, but better organization and leadership were needed. This assessment reflects the policies he would follow in 1918-20.*

To: Moscow—Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Lenin

I consider it necessary to confirm once again that our troops are good ones and fighting with a will. There are units that have lost over half their effectives which have still retained their combat-fitness in full.

As regards our over-all organisation we have effected a great improvement. Those who took part in the early period of fighting in the Ukraine and elsewhere unanimously testify that our present forces are incomparably better organised, better disciplined and more combat-fit. Certain units such as the Vladimir volunteer regiment are imbued with real fighting spirit. Here at the front they find an efficient and combatant atmosphere which will not allow them to become demoralised. The command apparatus is weak. Hence mishaps and, on occasion, panic retreats for no reason etc. But here too we are effecting an improvement. We have organised supply services, introduced a system of mobile inspectors, organised special mounted squads, ten men strong, to deal with panic, desertion, hooliganism etc. We have concentrated substantial forces of aviation here, which are terrorising bourgeois Kazan by dropping large quantities of dynamite on it. Air intelligence has started to yield

fruitful results. Vacetis is arriving here today and also the new Commander for the Kazan or Fifth detachment. I am firmly persuaded that all this will shortly secure for us a turning-point for the better.

I am none the less basing my organisational measures on the calculation of the war being of long duration. It is necessary that this war be made a popular one. It is necessary that the workers should feel this to be our war. Send some correspondents here—Dem'ian Bednyi and a pictorial artist.

Chikkolini, who has been appointed Commander of the Right-bank Group, is conducting himself like a hero.

Yesterday I sent a wounded sailor—Kalitaev, commander of an armoured train—off to Moscow in a hospital train. A real hero. His name should be given publicity and his photograph reproduced. Let me know about the over-all position.

Yours, Trotsky

Meijer, Vol. 1, pp. 81-83. See Permissions page.



## ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITY OF GRAIN REQUISITION DETACHMENTS

August 20, 1918

*Grain requisitioning became a greater concern as harvest time neared. Formally authorized August 4, 1918 (see above), and active even earlier, these detachments were an important part of the regime's effort to secure adequate food for the major cities, especially in the food-importing northern provinces. These three sets of instructions, all issued the same day over the signature of A. D. Tsiurupa, the People's Commissar for Food, represent an effort to give direction to what was becoming a disorderly process of requisitioning that sometimes deteriorated into simple pillage. In addition to their immediate economic role, the detachments also had a political role—to foment class struggle in the village, especially through their role in helping to set up Committees of the Village Poor (or, as in some documents, simply Committees of the Poor), which had been called for in a decree of June 11, 1918 (see above). Some of the problems associated with the grain requisition detachments, such as rivalry with military and other authorities in an area, are suggested in the documents. These detachments often had bloody clashes with the peasants, who often resisted requisition. The documents use various acronyms for the Commissariat and for food committees; these have been rendered in their full form here.*

### I

#### INSTRUCTIONS TO FOOD REQUISITION DETACHMENTS

1. Each food detachment is to consist of not less than seventy-five men, with two or three machine guns.

2. At the head of every detachment is a commander, appointed by the chief commissar for forming food supply detachments, and a political commissar, appointed by the Commissariat of Food or a person so empowered by it.

The commander is in charge of the purely military and economic activities.

The political commissar's duties include: a) organization of local Committees of the Village Poor; b) insuring that the detachment fulfills its duty, is imbued with revolutionary zeal and responsibility, and complies with all demands for revolutionary discipline.



3. All detachments operating in a district [uezd] are headed by a district military commander, and all detachments operating in a province are headed by a province military commander, who is appointed by the chief commissar for forming food supply detachments.

4. A general plan for grain requisitioning a given district is developed by the head of the requisition department, who is appointed by the province food commissar. Developing a general plan for grain requisition in a province is the responsibility of the head of the requisition department, who is chosen by the province food committee.

5. Food detachments are under the order only of their immediate commanders and are subordinated to other military commanders or commissars only in instances and in the manner indicated in decrees of the Council of People's Commissars.

6. In fulfilling the food plan the commander of detachments is guided by the directives of the responsible food supply organ and officials of the People's Commissariat of Food.

7. The detachments in a region should be distributed in such a way that two or three detachments can unite in a short time; there should be continuous cavalry communication among detachments.

8. Members of detachments are under military-revolutionary discipline; any violation of it will lead to immediate expulsion and transfer for trial.

Those guilty of theft, extortion, pillage, bribery or other such acts are to be arrested and turned over to the province Commission for Struggle with Counter-revolution [Cheka]. Those apprehended at the scene of the crime are to be shot.

All goods needed by the detachment are to be acquired at the established price and paid for in cash.

## II

### PROCEDURES FOR REQUISITIONING GRAIN

1. The political commissar, upon arriving at a village with his detachment, shall call a meeting of the village poor and explain to them the meaning of the decree on organizing the poorer classes of the village, the role which the kulaks play in the Russian counter-revolution, and then propose to the poor to organize a Committee [of the Poor] to collect grain from the kulaks and for supervising the distribution of grain, agricultural implements, and other necessities among the needy [peasants]. The number of members of the committee, manner of selecting, the rights and obligations of the committees, will be fixed by special instructions.

2. The Committee of the Poor, together with the political commissar of the detachment, will then issue an order to the population about surrendering all firearms, part of which is turned over to the newly elected Committee in order to form its own armed detachment, and the remainder to be sent by the commander of the detachment to the military commander of the province. All machine guns and hand grenades must be confiscated because they are needed by the army.

3. Then the food agents, assisted by the detachment and the members of the Committee of the Poor, shall proceed to make an inventory of all grain stores, including those of the poor. They will also uncover [and seize] all hidden grain stores, except that needed, according to the established norm, by the peasants for their families, for seed, and for their cattle.

4. After the entire grain surplus of a given village has been ascertained, part of that surplus shall be distributed among the local poor who do not have sufficient reserves of their own grain to last until the new harvest; this grain is not given directly to the village poor, but is transferred to the disposal of the Committees of the Poor for monthly distribution. The surplus grain remaining after satisfying the needs of the poor shall be taken to the nearest collection points and government warehouses.

5. For threshing and shipment [of grain] the earliest possible date will be set.

Note. All surplus grain delivered to collection points and government warehouses is at the disposal of the People's Commissariat of Food.

6. To oversee accurate and exact fulfillment of these regulations, one to two instructors and fifteen to twenty-five members of the detachment will remain behind, while the rest moves on to a neighboring village, where it proceeds in accordance with the above instructions.

7. Grain voluntarily surrendered on time is to be paid for at the station or wharf fixed price. The grain of those failing to comply with the law on grain delivery shall be requisitioned at 25% less than the fixed price. Hidden grain is subject to confiscation without compensation.

8. If toward the designated time the grain is not being thrashed, then poor peasants are to be enlisted for threshing; for this work they are to receive the average monthly, daily or piece rate of pay.

9. If there are threshing machines in the village, they must at this time be taken by the Committee of the Poor and used for the threshing.

10. For carting the surplus grain all means of transport are to be mobilized, and paid at the norm established by the Commissariat of Food.

11. Those who violate the law on grain monopoly by selling grain to bagmen or wasting it in making home-brew shall be arrested and turned over to the province Committee for Struggle with Counter-revolution [Cheka].

12. The detachment shall leave a village only after all grain surpluses have been delivered. Then the detachment immediately reports to the responsible province food committee 1) how much of it [the grain] was left for the needs of the poor, and 2) how much grain was delivered to collection points and government warehouses for use by the Commissariat of Food in the hungry provinces.

### III

#### INSTRUCTIONS TO AGITATION-ORGANIZATION DETACHMENTS

1. Special Agitation-Organization Detachments, composed of politically conscious workers who have been recommended by trade union and soviet organizations in grain consuming regions, are to be attached to food supply organs in grain producing provinces, at the discretion of the People's Commissar of Food.

2. Agitation-Organization Detachments are designated for work exclusively in the countryside and villages.

3. For coordination and direction of the activities of individual members, the detachment chooses from its membership the person who is best informed in the matter of provisioning and who is acquainted with all decrees, directives and instructions of the central authorities regarding food supply matters of the Republic.

4. On arrival the detachment is at the disposal of the local provincial or *oblast* food supply organization, which distributes detachment members by districts. Detachment members receive compensation from the provincial food supply organs in the amount of 400 rubles a month and 20 rubles allowance for patrols.

5. Each detachment member has under his supervision from one to four Committees of the Poor, depending on how close together or far away from each other they are.

6. Detachment members have the right to gather assemblies and convene meetings for explaining to the population various questions of food policy: about the absoluteness of the grain monopoly and fixed prices, about the organization of the rural poor, about registering supplies and surpluses of grain, about the significance and meaning of barter, etc.

7. For the purpose of attaining actual results in the struggle with the kulaks, detachment members, in cooperation with local food organs, are to organize local Committees of the Village Poor.

8. Detachment members direct the activity of these Committees of the Village Poor in the interests of general government supply plans and with these goals:

a) they cooperate with the local Committee of Village Poor in taking decisive and strict measures to discontinue the free trade in grain and especially the sale of grain to speculators;

b) they find in their own region, through the Committees of the Poor, how grain supplies are hidden by the rich, identify the surplus quantity, and cooperate with the committee in receiving, accounting for, and protecting these surpluses;

c) they cooperate with the local Committee of the Village Poor in taking quantities of the discovered grain surpluses for export to grain-collecting stations and in case of failure of these measures, immediately inform the district and province food committees of the situation;

d) they organize, via the Committee of the Village Poor, grain collecting stations, where they oversee the proper and continual work of these stations;

e) they cooperate with local Committees of the Village Poor in forming detachments of the poorest peasants for threshing of the unthreshed grain existing in some regions and for expediting the reaping of the new harvest;

f) they instruct these committees on introducing proper accounting, in compliance with the higher food organs, and if necessary invite a special accounting instructor from the Province Food Committee;

g) they organize, via the local Committees of the Village Poor, the transport of grain to grain-collecting points and stations, and where necessary act with the local officials to repair local roads so that these foodstuffs can be moved.

9. They summon the population to guard the crops, and to that end take the necessary measures, via the Committee of the Village Poor.

10. They encourage, in line with the decree of August 7, 1918, cooperation toward energetic preparation of grain and other products and the development of barter.

11. They inform the nearest food committee about all persons who interfere with the work of the detachment or agitate against it.

12. The detachment twice a month is to present an account of its work to the Province Food Committee, with a copy to the Commissariat of Food.

*Sistematicheskii sbornik dekretov i rasporiazhenii pravitel'stva po prodovol'stvennomu delu.* (Nizhnii Novgorod, 1919), pp. 106-109.



## TROTSKY ON THE COMMAND OF THE RED ARMY

August 23, 1918

*Trotsky had constantly to defend the use of officers of the old army in the command of the Red Army. This is a typical response to attacks by those party members opposed to his policy. He was especially disdainful of "party ignoramuses" who insisted on party membership as the key criterion for command. He also restates one of his other main themes throughout the Civil War: the need for a unified command.*

To: Moscow-Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Lenin.

Egorov's proposal for the integration of the command is unquestionably right and had in effect been raised by me more than once. The difficulties arise over the choice of a person. I had more than once nominated the candidate whom you have put forward. His candidature must be initially justified not by virtue of defeats and surrenders of towns but by virtue of victories. The appointment of which you speak can only take place after the first victory, when arguments for it can be produced.

As far as Larin's proposal to replace General Staff officers by Communists is concerned, in the first place it runs counter to the first proposal you put forward, since your candidate is not a Communist and those whom he selects to be at his side are not Communists, but men with military training and combat experience. Many of them commit acts of treachery. But on the railways, too, instances of sabotage are in evidence in the routing of troop trains. Yet nobody suggests replacing railway engineers by Communists. I consider Larin's proposal as being utterly worthless. The conditions are now being created whereby we can carry out a radical weeding-out among officers: on the one hand concentration camps, and, on the other, active service on the Eastern Front. Catastrophic measures such as that suggested by Larin can only be dictated by panic. These same victories at the front will give us the opportunity to consolidate the weeding-out that has been done and will provide us with cadres of reliable General Staff officers—just as much as from those who attempt to perform their duties in accordance with Larin's prescription. I ask that Larin be sent here for instruction. To sum up: firstly, integration of the command is essential and can be put through after the first victory; secondly, it is essential to make the entire military hierarchy more compact and get rid of the ballast by means of extracting those General Staff officers that are efficient and loyal to us and not on any account by means of replacing them with Party ignoramuses. Raskol'nikov, a trained sailor and a militant revolutionary, considers that even in the more modest sphere of the Navy Department any other policy is absolutely impossible and demands the dispatch of trained naval officers here although the last-named are worse than those in the land forces and the percentage of traitors among them higher. Those who clamour the loudest against making use of officers are either people infected with panic or those who are remote from the entire work of the military apparatus or such Party military figures as are themselves worse than any saboteur—such as are incapable of keeping an eye on anything, behave like satraps, spend their time doing nothing and, when they meet with failure, shuffle off the blame on to the General Staff officers.

Trotsky

Meijer, Vol. 1, 107-109. See Permissions page.



## THE ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF LENIN

August 30, 1918

*On August 30 a young woman named Fania Kaplan-Roid wounded Lenin during an assassination attempt. She had past connections with both the anarchists and the Socialist Revolutionaries, but historians have generally doubted that she was part of a broad organizational plot. However, the same day as the attack on Lenin the head of the Petrograd Cheka, M. S. Uritsky, was assassinated in an apparently unrelated incident. These attacks, coming less than two months after the assassination of another Bolshevik leader, V. Volodarsky, and an uprising against the government by its Left S.R. allies, had a major impact on the Bolsheviks. It helped spark a more extensive and brutal Red Terror (see following documents). Some historians have also linked it to the beginning of the cult of Lenin and to the decline of toleration of internal party dissent. The following document is the government's announcement of the attack.*

TO ALL SOVIETS OF WORKERS', PEASANTS', AND RED ARMY DEPUTIES!

ALL, ALL, ALL!

A few hours ago a brutal attempt was made to assassinate Comrade Lenin. The role of Comrade Lenin, his importance for the proletarian movement of Russia and of the world in general, is known to vast circles of workers in every country.

A true leader of the working class, he never lost intimate contact with the class whose interests and needs he has championed for many years. On Friday Comrade Lenin...appeared at a meeting of the workers of the Mikhelson Shops. Upon leaving the meeting he was wounded. Several persons have been arrested and their identity is being established.

We have no doubt that the clues will lead to the Socialist-Revolutionists of the Right, hirelings of the British and French.

We call upon all comrades to remain calm and to redouble their efforts in the fight against counter-revolutionary elements. The working class will meet every attack on its leaders with greater consolidation of its forces and merciless mass terror against the enemies of the revolution.

Comrades! Remember that the safeguarding of the lives of your leaders is in your own hands. Close your ranks to deliver a mortal blow to the bourgeoisie! Victory over the bourgeoisie is the best guarantee of the preservation of the gains of the November Revolution, the best guarantee of the safety of the leaders of the working class. Calm and organization!

YA. Sverdlov

Chairman of the Central Executive Committee

Bunyan, *Intervention, Communism and Civil War*, pp. 237-238, with one missing line added by the editor.



## INTENSIFICATION OF THE RED TERROR

September 4-5, 1918

*Both sides executed opponents during the summer of 1918. However, the attempted assassination of Lenin and attacks on other Bolshevik leaders led to demands for more widespread use of terror by the Bolsheviks. On September 4 the Commissar for Internal Affairs sent the following order to local officials. The next day the Council of People's Commissars passed a resolution officially approving more extensive use of terror. There was a wave of executions following the events of August 30, with 512 announced in Petrograd alone on September 7 (See September 12, below, for an account of one incident in Novgorod). Volodarsky and Uritsky were prominent Bolsheviks assassinated in Petrograd in June and August, respectively.*

## ORDER FOR INTENSIFIED RED TERROR

SEPTEMBER 4

The murder of Volodarskii, the murder of Uritzkii, the attempt to murder and the wounding of the President of the Council of People's Commissars, Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin, the mass shooting of tens of thousands of our comrades in Finland, in Ukraina and, finally on the Don, and in Czecho-Slavia [sic] the constant discovery of plots in the rear of our army, the open implication of Right Socialist Revolutionaries and other counterrevolutionary scoundrels in these plots, and at the same time the extremely negligible number of serious repressions and mass shootings of the White Guards and the bourgeoisie by the Soviets, all this shows that,

notwithstanding constant words about mass terror against the Socialist Revolutionaries, the White Guards and the bourgeoisie, this terror really does not exist.

There must emphatically be an end of such a situation. There must be an immediate end of looseness and tenderness. All Right Socialist Revolutionaries who are known to local Soviets must be arrested immediately. Considerable numbers of hostages must be taken from among the bourgeoisie and the officers. At the least attempt at resistance or the least movement among the White Guards mass shooting must be inflicted without hesitation. The local Provincial Executive Committees must display special initiative in this direction.

The departments of administration, through the militia, and the Extraordinary Commissions must take all measures to detect and arrest all persons who are hiding under assumed names and must shoot without fail all who are implicated in White Guard activity.

All the above mentioned measures must be carried out immediately.

The heads of the departments of administration are bound to report immediately to the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs any actions in this connection of organs of the local Soviets which are indecisive.

The rear of our armies must, at last, be finally cleared of all White Guard activity and of all vile plotters against the power of the working class and of the poorest peasantry. Not the least wavering, not the least indecision in the application of mass terror.

Confirm the receipt of this telegram.

Communicate it to the county Soviets.

People's Commissar for Internal Affairs, Petrovsky

#### RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS ON RED TERROR SEPTEMBER 5

The Council of People's Commissars, having heard the report of the Chairman of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-revolution, Speculation and Crime about the activities of this Commission, finds: that in the present situation the safeguarding of the rear by means of terror is necessary; that it is necessary to send a greater number of responsible party comrades to the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-revolution, Speculation and Crime in order to strengthen its work and to introduce into it a more systematic character; that it is necessary to safeguard the Soviet Republic from class enemies by isolating them in concentration camps; that all persons associated with White Guard organizations, plots and rebellions are liable to be shot; that it is necessary to publish the names of all those shot and the reasons for shooting them.

Chamberlin, Vol. 2, pp. 475-76; *Sobranie zakononii i rasporiazhenii*, 1918, No. 65, St. 710, p. 789. See Permissions page.



#### TERROR AND ITS DEFENSE. A PROTEST BY THE NEUTRAL POWERS AND CHICHERIN'S RESPONSE September 5 and 12, 1918

*On September 5 a group of diplomats from neutral countries presented a note which embodied the substance of a conversation two days earlier with Zinoviev regarding the use of terror by the Soviet government, especially its announced intent to exterminate whole classes of people. Chicherin on September 12 responded and delivered a defense of repressive measures by Russia which was also an attack on other countries. Noteworthy is the assertion that the Soviet*

state represented not only its own citizens "but also all exploited humanity." Both documents are given here.

## I

*The Swiss, Danish, and Netherland Ministers, the Swedish, Norwegian, Spanish, and Persian Chargés, and the German Consul General, to the Soviet Commissar of the Northern Commune (Zinoviev)*

The representatives of the Diplomatic Corps at Petrograd, having been themselves witnesses of the arrest of great numbers of persons of all ages and both sexes, and the summary executions daily carried out by the soldiers of the Red Army, requested an interview with Commissar Zinoviev, who received them on Monday, September 3. They stated that they had no intention of interfering in the political contests at present disrupting Russia; but that, taking a purely humanitarian point of view, they wished to express, in the name of the Governments they represent, their profound indignation at the reign of terror instituted in the cities of Petrograd, Moscow, etc.

Without any other reason than that of gratifying their hate against a whole class of citizens, without orders from a legal power of any sort, crowds of armed men enter day or night into private houses, plunder and steal, arrest and throw into prison hundreds of unfortunate people entirely unconnected with political struggle, whose only crime is to belong to the middle classes, and whose extermination is proclaimed by the leaders of the country in their own papers and in their speeches. It is quite impossible for the poor distressed families to obtain any information as to the place where their relatives have been imprisoned; permission is denied them to communicate with the prisoners and to supply them with the necessary food.

Such acts of violence, incomprehensible on the part of men who profess their wish to promote the happiness of mankind, call forth the indignation of the civilized world, now acquainted with the events in Petrograd.

The Diplomatic Corps considered it its duty to inform Commissar Zinoviev of the feelings of reprobation which animate it. It has protested and it does protest energetically against the arbitrary acts which are being committed every day. The representatives of the powers make all express reservations as to the right of their Governments to demand the satisfactions which may be considered necessary and to render personally responsible before the courts all perpetrators of the criminal acts which have been committed or may be committed in future.

They ask that the terms of the present note be brought to the knowledge of the Soviet government. [Petrograd, September 5, 1918]

## II

*Reply of the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs (Chicherin) to the Joint Note of the Diplomatic Corps*

The note which was handed us by the representatives of the neutral powers on September 5 is an act of grave interference in the internal affairs of Russia. The Soviet government could let it remain entirely unanswered, but the Soviet government always with pleasure takes advantage of every opportunity to explain the meaning of its policy to the masses of people in all countries, since the government not only represents the labor class in Russia, but also all exploited humanity. The Commissariat of the People gives the following reply regarding the questions touched in the note:

The neutral powers try to represent a picture of the oppressed bourgeoisie in Russia, a picture which is to arouse deep indignation of the bourgeoisie of the entire world. We do not intend to deny the assertions made by the representatives of the neutral powers, who, in their note, repeat all the lies which are spread by the Russian bourgeoisie about the Red

Army. Neither do we wish to deny assertions regarding concrete cases of abuse since the representatives of the neutral powers, in the first place, do not give any concrete cases, and in the second place, abuses on the part of individuals always occur in every war, and we are engaged in a civil war. But the representatives of the neutral powers do not protest against separate abuses of irresponsible persons, but against the regime which is carried out by the workers' and peasants' government in its fight against the exploiting classes. Before we explain why the workers' and peasants' government uses the red terror, against which the representatives of the neutral powers protest in the name of humanity, and because of which they threaten us with the condemnation of the whole civilized world, we permit ourselves to ask a few questions. Is it known to the representatives that the international war is now in its fifth year? In this war small groups, consisting of bankers, generals and bureaucrats, have thrown the masses of people of all the world to kill and destroy each other in order that the capitalists might earn milliards for their own account. Do you know that in this war not only millions have died at the front, but that both belligerents have bombarded open cities and killed defenseless women and children? Do you know that one of the belligerent parties in this war condemned tens of millions of people to famine by cutting this country off from the supply of grain, in spite of international laws? That this belligerent party hopes that the starvation of the children will force the other party to surrender to the victor, grace or no grace? Do you know that the other party makes prisoners of hundreds of thousands of defenseless, peaceful "enemy" citizens and sends them to compulsory labor far from their homes, taking from them all right to defense? Is it known to you that in all the belligerent countries the ruling capitalist clique has taken from the masses the freedom of assembly, the freedom of the press, the freedom of strike, that for every attempt to protest against this white terror the bourgeoisie condemn the workers to prison or send them to the front to kill, in that way, every thought of their human rights? All these pictures of the crushing of the laboring class in the interest of capital, all these pictures of the white terror against the proletariat, are very well known to the leaders of the neutral capitalistic countries and their representatives in Russia. Still they seem either to have forgotten the exalted ideals of humanity or else they have forgotten, in this case, the masses who have been killed on the battlefields.

The so-called neutral powers did not dare to protest with a single word against the white terror of capital, nor did they wish to, because the bourgeoisie in all neutral countries have helped the capitalists of the belligerent countries to continue the war, earning milliards on deliveries made to both belligerent camps.

We take the liberty of putting still another question. Have you, the representatives of the neutral powers, heard anything about the massacre of the Sinn Feins in Dublin, about the execution, without trial, of hundreds of Irishmen with Skeffington at the head? Have you heard anything about the white terror in Finland, about tens of thousands who have been shot, about tens of thousands of workers imprisoned, about their wives and children, against which no protests have been or will be made? Have you heard about the mass executions of workers and peasants in the Ukraine, about the mass execution of workers by the heroic Czecho-Slovaks, the hired bandits of French-English capital?

The governments of the so-called neutral powers have surely heard about them but it has never occurred to them to protest against these actions of the bourgeoisie who suppress the labor movement since they themselves, in their own countries, are forced to suppress every labor movement in order to favor the interests of the bourgeoisie thereby. It is sufficient to recall the labor demonstrations in Denmark, Norway, Holland and Switzerland which were put down with the aid of the military. The workers in Holland, Switzerland and Denmark have not had time to act before the Governments of these countries have had time to mobilize their military forces to suppress the slightest protests on the part of the masses of people. If the representatives of the neutral powers threaten us with the indignation of the civilized world and protest against the red terror in the name of humanity, we beg to point out to them



that they have not been sent here to protect humanity, but to protect the interests of capitalistic countries, and we advise them not to threaten us with the indignation of the whole civilized world which is covered from head to foot with the blood of workers, but to fear the fury of the masses of people of the whole world, who are marching against the "civilization" which has led humanity to this butchery which is without result. In all the capitalistic world there exists the white terror against the laboring class. The working class in Russia has destroyed the power of Tsarism, whose bloody regime has not called forth any protests from the neutral powers. The working class in Russia has destroyed the reign of the bourgeoisie in Russia which, under the flag of the revolution and the silence of the neutral powers, executed soldiers who did not wish to spill blood in the interests of the war speculators. They also executed peasants who declared the earth to be their property, the earth which they have plowed for a hundred years and moistened with their sweat. The greater part of the Russian people, as represented by the second Workers' Congress, have put the power in the hands of the workers' and peasants' government. A group of capitalists who wanted to regain their factories and banks which had been taken from them in favor of the people, a group of property owners who wish to rob the peasants of their ground, a group of generals who again wish to force the workers and peasants to obedience with a whip, all these did not approve of this, the decision of the Russian people. With the help of foreign capital they have mobilized counter-revolutionary bands with whose assistance they cut Russia off from bread so that the hand of starvation may quell the Russian revolution. They have become convinced that it is impossible to overthrow the workers' government which is supported by the masses of people. They try to instigate counter-revolutionary disturbances amongst these masses in order to hinder the workers' and peasants' government in its efforts to lead the country out of the anarchy into which the criminal politics of the former government have brought it. They have sold Russia in the south, north and east to foreign imperialistic countries, gathering foreign bayonets from all directions they could get them. Behind the forest of these foreign bayonets they send hired murderers to kill the leaders of the laboring class, in whom not only Russia's proletariat but all humanity see the realization of their hopes.

This counter-revolutionary clique which utilizes foreign and Russian capital to force slavery and war on the Russian people, this clique the Russian workers will ruthlessly annihilate. We declare before the proletariat of the whole world that no outward protests and representations will deter the hand which is to punish those who raise arms against the workers and the poorest peasants in Russia, who wish to starve them and who wish to drive them into new wars in the interests of capital. We assure equal rights and liberties to all those who loyally fulfil the duties which belong to the citizens of the socialistic Russian Republic. To them we bring peace, against our enemies a ruthless war!

We are convinced that the masses of people in all countries which are oppressed and terrorized by small groups of exploiters will understand that violence in Russia is used only in the holy interests for the liberation of the masses, and that they will not only understand us, but even follow the same path as we.

We reject most energetically the interference of the neutral capitalistic powers in favor of the Russian bourgeoisie and declare that in every attempt on the part of representatives of these powers to exceed the limits for the lawful protection of the interests of their citizens, we will see an attempt to support the Russian counter-revolution.

Chicherin

*Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Russia, 1918, Vol. 1, pp. 697-698, 705-708.*

ARRESTS AND EXECUTIONS FOLLOWING  
THE ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF LENIN

September 12, 1918

*The attempt on Lenin's life and the assassination of Uritskii on August 30 (see above) sparked widespread reprisals (over 500 were executed in Petrograd alone). The targets were assorted political figures, military officers and the bourgeoisie generally, but just who was caught up was largely a matter of chance, as this letter shows. It was sent by V. Bok from Novgorod to Iu. V. Got'e in Moscow about the latter's brother, Vladimir, an army officer who had been arrested in Novgorod and was scheduled to be released when the attack on Lenin changed everything. Others who had been held with Vladimir Got'e were less fortunate. For information on Got'e and his diary, see the introduction to January 5, 1919.*

Letter of V. Bok to Iu. V. Got'e

Deeply Respected Iurii Vladimirovich:

I was not in Novgorod when your telegram arrived, and that is why I am able to write you only today.

Vladimir Vladimirovich, thank God, is alive and well, but remains under guard. A day or two before the Moscow assassination attempt and the Petrograd murder, the case of your brother, and also that of the assistant procurator Troitskii and others, were sent from the Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-revolution to the tribunal, which intended to free all the prisoners. But then the events in Moscow and Petersburg struck, and all the cases were hastily recalled to the Extraordinary Commission. And on the following morning six persons were shot, including my professional associate, poor V. A. Troitskii. One competent person, whom you also visited here in connection with your brother's case, told me that by some happy accident Vladimir Vladimirovich's case was not returned then to the Extraordinary Commission and it is possibly only thanks to that that Vladimir Vladimirovich, by God's will, was not the seventh victim.

The same person advised me (I went to him about the possibility of freeing the hostages, numbering sixty persons, including our former procurator) to wait a little until the excitement in high places over the Moscow (and Petrograd) events subsides, and then it will be possible to take measures in the Extraordinary Commission toward freeing the prisoners on bail. At present two merchants and one officer have already been freed on bail of 3,000-5,000 rubles. In the Extraordinary Commission everything depends on its chairman; at present that post is occupied by a local man, one Alekseev, a student. They told me that he is a man with a head on his shoulders and good sense, and far from cruel. Therefore, in my opinion, you ought to leave again for Novgorod and take all measures here for freeing your brother. Unfortunately, all efforts of outsiders, nonrelatives, are looked on here as interference in the affairs of others and are therefore completely useless.

I have just learned that the local barrister Bogoliubov, one of the hostages, has been freed on bail. Your brother is not on the list of hostages, but it is clear that he was not released in good time only because of the events that occurred in the capitals. I think your presence in Novgorod and your efforts are extremely necessary, and the sooner the better. I of course consider it my duty to help you in any way I can.

Please accept my assurance of most sincere devotion and respect.

V. Bok

Got'e, pp. 466-467.

## REQUISITION AND DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING IN MOSCOW

September 17, 1918

*Housing was a difficult problem in the larger cities and especially in Moscow and Petrograd. The state issued various decrees to deal with the problem, most involving forced requisition and sharing of space. This decree, by city authorities in Moscow, reflects the regime's class preference system used in rationing all items of short supply, including housing, and shows how the housing shortage could also be used to attack the former propertied elements and carry through a social revolution. For the impact on individuals, see February 24, 1919, below.*

Decree of the Executive of the Moscow Soviet of Workers' and Red Army Deputies, relating to procedure to be adopted in commandeering dwellings and movable property, dated September 11, 1918:—

1. With the object of finding, and providing workers with, healthy dwellings, there must be organised in each region [of the city] a Housing Commission, comprising delegates from the following organisations:—

- From the Regional Soviet of Deputies.
- From Factory Committees.
- From Trade Unions.
- From the Regional Committee of the Russian Communist Party.
- From the Regional Branch of the All-Russian Extraordinary Committee. [Cheka]

2. The Commission mentioned in paragraph 1 notes houses in the Region suitable for workers' dwellings, and inspects these houses.

This Committee settles on the spot which of the tenants of a given house are to be expelled from Moscow, which of them can be provided with a dwelling in another place, or in the same building, and who can be left in the dwellings they occupy.

This work of re-distributing the tenants of a house must be exclusively done by the Commission, composed as indicated above, and must not on any account be passed on to House Committees or to any of the Dwellings' Department's individual Controllers.

When a house is being inspected and tenants are being redistributed it is desirable that representatives of the tenants of the house, and particularly of the proletarian inhabitants, should be induced to assist the Commission.

3. After inspection of the houses the Commission is to draw up a report, stating:— (1) The number of dwellings (specifying number of rooms) available for new tenants; (2) the names of the tenants of the house.

The occupants of houses are to be divided into four categories:—

- a. Workers (certified by Trade Unions, Factory Committees and party nuclei).
- b. Responsible Soviet employees (certified by their respective institutions).
- c. Others of the working population.
- d. Non-working parasitic elements.

[The housing allocation of each category will be:—]

a. Labouring and Soviet communist-workers remain in their dwellings.

b. Responsible Soviet workers are to be provided with a dwelling in the same or in some other house.

c. Persons engaged in work of public necessity are to be provided with a dwelling in the region where they work, or at all events in the region where they formerly lived.

d. Non-working elements are to be expelled from Moscow, and a list of such persons is to be sent by the Regional Soviet to the Central Dwellings Commission. Expulsion from Moscow can only take place on the order of the Central Dwellings Commission and, prior to receipt of sanction of the latter, Regional Soviets cannot give orders for expulsion from the town.

Note—Soviet workers and persons engaged in work of public necessity can only be evicted when other premises are provided for them.

4. Citizens who receive orders to move into another house or into other quarters have the right to demand a reconsideration of the decision of the Regional Dwellings Department. Such applications are received in the Regional Dwellings Department. The applications are reviewed by the Dwellings Commission. A term (not less than three days) must be given for handing in these applications.

5. Dwellings for the working population can be requisitioned by no other organisations except those indicated in this present ordinance (*i.e.*, only by the Central Dwellings Commission).

6. The requisition of premises for Government and public institutions, and for military detachments, is only effected by order of the Central Land and Dwellings Department of the Moscow Workers' and Red Army Deputies' Councils. No other organisation can requisition premises, and persons guilty of a breach of this ordinance will be brought to the strictest account and be discharged from the posts they occupy.

7. When dwellings are requisitioned the movable property that serves the dwelling is confiscated in the case of persons who are in hiding or who have been expelled from Moscow.

Note—All stocks of fuel at a requisitioned house are taken into account by the Fuel Department of the Regional Soviet.

8. Confiscation and requisition of movable property is effected, every time, at the order of the Presidential Bureau of the Regional Soviet. Decisions of the Presidential Bureau are to be sent for execution to the Dwellings Commission. The Commission takes an inventory (in duplicate) of the property requisitioned. One copy remains with the Dwellings Commission, and the other is sent to the Central Land and Dwellings Department.

9. The requisitioned articles are warehoused.

10. Requisitioned articles pass into use only on the order of Presidential Bureau of the Regional Soviet. In every separate case a deed is drawn up, containing a list of the articles transferred, and signed by the members of that Bureau.

The deed is drawn up in duplicate, one copy of which is sent to the Central Dwellings Department.

The transfer of movable property without a deed being drawn up, and without the same being sent to the Central Dwellings Department is illegal.

11. The responsibility for the strictest observance of the regulations enumerated in paragraphs 1 to 10, is imposed on the Presidential Bureaux of the Regional Soviets.

12. The right of confiscating movable property belongs to the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission only as a punitive measure.

*Daily Review of the Foreign Press, Neutral Press Supplement, February 7, 1919, p. 349.*



## HOLDING FAMILIES OF OFFICERS HOSTAGE

September 30, 1918

*One of the problems of using officers of the old army in the new Red Army was that the former often opposed the new regime, leading either to lethargy or even desertion, perhaps at critical times. To deal with this, the regime sometimes held family members hostage for good behavior. This order by Trotsky was typical of several such issued; one later order included a provision that only officers with families be recruited (so that there would be hostages).*

ORDER BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR COUNCIL OF THE REPUBLIC  
September 30, 1918

Cases of treacherous flight by members of the commanding apparatus into the enemy's camp, though less frequent, are still occurring. These monstrous crimes must be stopped, without shrinking from any measures. The turncoats are betraying the Russian workers and peasants to the Anglo-French and Japano-American robbers and hangmen. Let the turncoats realise that they are at the same time betraying their own families—their fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, wives and children.

I order the headquarters of all the armies of the Republic, and also the district commissars to supply by telegram to member of the Revolutionary War Council Aralov lists of all the members of the commanding apparatus who have gone over to the enemy camp, with all needful data about their family situation. I entrust Comrade Aralov with the responsibility for taking, in co-operation with the appropriate institutions, the measures necessary for arresting the families of deserters and traitors.

Trotsky, *How the Revolution Armed*, Vol. 1, p. 196.



# RESOLUTION OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ABOUT IMMINENT REVOLUTION IN EUROPE

October 3, 1918

*With the Central Powers on the verge of collapse, Soviet hopes for the spread of revolution through Europe revived. This resolution vigorously states not only the expectation, but Soviet readiness to assist revolution.*

The All-Russian Central Executive Committee considers it necessary before the working class of all countries, to define its attitude to the events now unfolding. The imperialist classes of the Central Empires are suffering a catastrophic collapse—Bulgaria and Turkey have fallen away from the alliance; Austria-Hungary's turn is next. Within Germany there is complete instability. The policy of the ruling classes oscillates between a military dictatorship and a parliamentary government of liberals, Catholics, and the social traitors among the Social Democrats. The Anglo-French, American, and Japanese imperialist robbers now seem all-powerful, as, six months ago, at the time of the Brest-Litovsk peace, Germany seemed all-powerful. Now, after their new victories, the Allied robbers are even more dangerous and outright enemies of the Soviet Republic. But just as, when German military power was most triumphant, we foresaw the inevitable failure of their wonderful robber plans, so now we are as firmly convinced of the approaching downfall of imperialism in the Allied countries. The profound internal struggles among those taking part in the universal robbery, and the still more profound upheavals among the deceived and exhausted masses, are leading the capitalist world into the epoch of social revolution.

Now, as in October last year, and at the time of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations, the Soviet Government builds its entire policy on the prospect of the social revolution in both imperialist camps. The strength and certainty of this calculation allowed us to accept the odious provisions of the Brest-Litovsk treaty, in which we did not for one moment see history's last word. And now, binding the fate of the Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, the Baltic, and Finland closely to the fate of the proletarian revolution, we reject any idea whatever of any

*rapprochement* with Allied imperialism for the purpose of changing the provisions of the Brest-Litovsk treaty. The chains which the Anglo-American and Japanese-American robbers bring to the people are no better than the Austro-German chains.

A military dictatorship in Germany is as little able now to divert the course of events as a parliamentary coalition of bourgeois businessmen and acquiescent lackeys. The German working class is moving irresistibly towards power. In this process the struggle of the Anglo-American robbers against the Austro-German robbers may from day to day change into a struggle of imperialism against proletarian Germany.

Before the entire world the Central Executive Committee declares that in this struggle the whole of Soviet Russia will, with all its forces and all its means, support the revolutionary power in Germany against its imperialist enemies. The Central Executive Committee does not doubt that the revolutionary proletariat of France, England, Italy, America, and Japan will be in the same camp as Soviet Russia and revolutionary Germany.

While awaiting revolutionary events, which are rapidly moving forward, the Central Executive Committee considers it the primary duty of the workers and peasants of Russia to redouble their struggle against the invading Allied bandits and at the same time to prepare active military assistance and food supplies for the working classes of Germany and Austria-Hungary. The Central Executive Committee instructs the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic to work out immediately an extended programme for the formation of the Red Army, in keeping with the new requirements of the international situation. It instructs the People's Commissariat for Food to draw up immediately a plan for building up food reserves for the working masses of Germany and Austria-Hungary in their struggle against the internal and external robbers.

All Soviet institutions, central and local, trade unions, factory committees, committees of the poor, co-operatives, are to use their initiative in taking an active part in creating a powerful Red Army and in mobilizing food reserves for the social revolution.

Degras, *Documents on Soviet Foreign Policy*, Vol. 1, p. 111-112.



## TROTSKY VS. STALIN. THE CONFLICT AT TSARITSYN OVER MILITARY POLICY AND ORGANIZATION

October 3 and 4, 1918

*During the fall 1918 campaign on the Volga there occurred an incident, the so-called Tsaritsyn affair, which not only illustrates the party struggles over how the army should be organized, but was also an early stage of the struggle between Stalin and Trotsky. Trotsky, drawing on his successes at Kazan, was attempting to apply the same centralizing organizational policies to the "Southern Front" along the lower Volga; he obtained party and government approval for this. However, his policies, and the appointment of General P. P. Sytin as commander, met with strong opposition from Stalin, Voroshilov, and Minin, the "Tsaritsyn group," who made up the Military Revolutionary Committee there. They rejected both Sytin and the policies coming from Trotsky. After several exchanges, the Tsaritsyn group sent the following letter to Lenin attacking Sytin and Trotsky. Trotsky in return demanded Stalin's recall from Tsaritsyn (the second document below). Stalin was recalled, but also was put on the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic in Moscow, where he could continue to represent those opposed to Trotsky's policies of centralization, use of former tsarist officers, and a more hierarchical command structure, issues which periodically reemerged in party debates.*

## I

To Lenin, 3 October 1918

We have received a telegraphed order from Trotsky, a copy of which you should have received along with [our] reply. In our view, this order was written by a man who knows nothing about the southern front, who threatens to place all the affairs of the front and of the revolution in the hands of General Sytin, a man who not only is unneeded at the front, but who does not even merit confidence and is therefore damaging. We certainly cannot approve of the front going to ruin as a result of an untrustworthy general. Trotsky may hide behind talk of discipline, but everyone realizes that Trotsky is not RVSR and that an order from Trotsky is not an order from RVSR.

Orders are meaningful only if based on a calculation of forces and on a thorough knowledge of the issues. To hand the front over, as Trotsky has done, to a man who does not merit confidence, is tantamount to trampling on the most elementary image of proletarian discipline and of the interests of the revolution, and of the front. Accordingly we, as members of the party, categorically declare that we consider the execution of Trotsky's orders to be criminal, and his threats unworthy.

The party Central Committee needs to discuss the behaviour of Trotsky, who abuses very eminent [!] party members to the advantage of traitors among the military specialists and to the detriment of the interests of the front and of the revolution. It needs to examine the intolerable fact that Trotsky issues orders on his own (*edinolichnie prikazy*), which bear absolutely no relation to the conditions of the place and time, and which threaten the front with disaster. It needs to review the question of specialist officers who belong to the camp of non-party counter-revolutionaries.

We therefore propose that the party Central Committee discuss all these problems at its next sitting, to which, in the case of special need, we shall send a spokesman.

*Central Committee member Stalin*  
*Party member Voroshilov*

## II

From: Tambov

To: Moscow—Chairman of the Central Executive Committee.

Copied to: Moscow—Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Lenin.

I categorically insist on Stalin's recall. Things are going badly on the Tsaritsyn Front, despite a superabundance of military forces. Voroshilov is able to command a regiment, but not an army of fifty thousand men. None the less I will retain him as Commander of the Tenth Tsaritsyn Army on condition that he places himself under the orders of the Commander of the Southern Front, Sytin. Right up to this day the Tsaritsyn people have failed to send even operational reports to Kozlov. I had required them to submit operational and intelligence reports twice daily. If this is not carried out tomorrow I shall commit Voroshilov and Minin for trial and announce this in an army order. So long as Stalin and Minin remain in Tsaritsyn, according to the constitution of the Military Revolutionary Council they merely enjoy the rights of members of the Military Revolutionary Council of the Tenth Army. For the purpose of launching an attack there remains only a short while before the autumn weather makes the roads impassable, when there will be no through road here either on foot or on horseback. Operations in strength are impossible without coordination of operations with Tsaritsyn. There is no time for diplomatic negotiations. Tsaritsyn must either obey orders or get out of the way. We have a colossal superiority in forces but total anarchy at the top. This can be put to rights within 24 hours given firm and resolute support your end. In any event this is the only course of action that I can envisage.

Trotsky (Seal affixed)

## THE UNIFIED LABOR SCHOOL

October 16, 1918

*The Commissariat of Education had stressed the importance of local control of education, and provided for local educational councils to function within local governmental soviets. Nevertheless, it also undertook to provide a general educational policy and structure, the "Unified Labor School." There were differences among Bolshevik educational leaders, but all generally agreed on the importance of an activity-based educational program, on a curriculum which stressed learning technical skills and which involved some practical workshop activity, on abolition of the old discipline and examination systems, and on the role of the schools as a progressive force shaping a new person in a new society. Many, including A. V. Lunacharsky, the Commissar of Enlightenment, and his co-worker—and Lenin's wife—Nadezhda Krupskaya, believed that changing the psychology of people through education was an essential prerequisite to achieving socialism. The most important step in this direction during these years was the effort to set up Unified Labor Schools, even though conditions meant that they could hardly be widely and generally established as envisioned. This document, in highly edited form, gives the key passages from the decree establishing the schools. The philosophy underlying the schools is provided by Lunacharsky in the next document.*

DECREE ON THE UNIFIED LABOR SCHOOL  
OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATED SOVIET REPUBLIC

## I. General Regulations on the Unified Labor School

Art. 1. All schools of the Russian Socialist Federated Socialist Republic which come under the People's Commissariat of Enlightenment, excepting institutions of higher education, are given the name "Unified Labor School...."

Art. 2. The Unified School is divided into two levels: the first for children ages 8-13 years (a five year course) and the second for ages 13-17 (a four year course)....

Art. 3. Instruction in schools of the first and second levels is free.

Art. 4. School attendance for levels one and two is mandatory for all children of school age.

Note: The Section for People's Education [of the Commissariat] must immediately develop a plan for implementation....

Art. 5. All schools of the first and second levels are co-educational.

Art. 6. The teaching of any religion whatsoever and the holding of religious ceremonies within the schools is prohibited.

Art. 7. The differentiation of teachers by category is abolished....

Art. 8. All school workers, i.e., teachers, school doctors, and instructors in physical labor, are chosen in accordance with the regulations of February 27, 1918 about the election to all pedagogical and administrative-pedagogical positions, and the instructions of the People's Commissariat of Enlightenment....

Art. 10. There may not be more than 25 students per school worker....

## III. Organization and Conditions of School Work

Art. 17. Assignment of mandatory homework is not permitted.

Art. 18. No kind of punishment is permitted in school.

Art. 19. All examinations—entrance, advancement, graduation—are abolished....

*Izvestiia*, October 16, 1918.



## LUNACHARSKY ON THE UNIFIED LABOR SCHOOL

October 16, 1918

*See the introduction to the previous document. In this statement, published along with the decree establishing the Unified Labor Schools, Lunacharsky explains the philosophy underlying the new school system. The essay is abridged.*

## BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR A UNIFIED LABOR SCHOOL

A new school year is upon us. Under any sort of normal conditions, one would have had every right to anticipate that the great October Revolution would be reflected in radical and productive reforms within our schools—reforms so all-encompassing that they would have made the Russian schools preeminent in the civilized world, at least with regard to the underlying principles on which they were based.

But of course, even under such completely normal circumstances, a school system cannot be reborn in a single instant and at first the reality might, to a greater or lesser extent, have lagged behind the plan.

At the present time we have the right to hope only for a partial reform, since we are encountering obstacles associated not only with the deficiencies in the number of schools, their facilities and equipment, and the level of preparation of their teachers, but also with deficiencies in the plans themselves due to the total devastation wrought by sabotage in the central offices and throughout the school bureaucracy—devastation from which we have only very recently begun to emerge. Despite all demonstrations that the Commissariat is ready to make every effort to transform our long-suffering schools into institutions that will truly serve the people, for political reasons a portion of the teachers remain hostile, which, of course, is enormously harmful to this complex and delicate enterprise of school reform, where the sincere and energetic participation of everyone involved is so urgently needed.

Yet, although the actual reforms our schools undergo will be compelled by necessity to be only partial (without, however, preventing them, as all the decrees that have been issued demonstrate, from being the most radical school reforms the world has ever known), the Commissariat believes this makes it even more essential to establish the goal toward which reform is heading and, in addition to providing a list of individual reforms subject to immediate implementation, to sketch a portrait of the school system toward which we are striving and which is the only school system we acknowledge to be appropriate in a renewed Russia.

School reform after the October Revolution obviously has the nature of a manifestation of the masses' struggle for knowledge and education. It is the obligation of the Commissariat of Enlightenment to act with all haste to destroy class privileges in this area, perhaps the most important one of all. What is required is not merely to make our schools as they exist today accessible to all, since, in the form that they were created by the previous regime, they are not suitable for the working masses; what is needed is radical restructuring to make them into schools that truly serve the people....

The new schools must not merely be free of charge at all levels, not merely accessible, with schooling made mandatory as soon as possible so that they become firmly entrenched, but they must also be *unified and labor-oriented*.

What does it mean that the schools must be unified?

This means that the entire system of regular schools, from kindergarten to university, will form a single school system, a single uninterrupted ladder. This means that all children must enter the same type of school and begin their education in the identical way, that they will all have the right to climb the ladder to its highest rungs....

The new schools must be *oriented toward labor*. For schools of the Soviet State, which is in the process of transition from capitalism to socialism, this, of course, is vastly more

important than it is for schools in progressive capitalist nations, and yet they too have acknowledged the need for such schools and have even made some progress toward implementing them.

The need to introduce labor as the basis for instruction has two completely different rationales, the results of which, however, readily reinforce each other.

The first rationale comes from psychology, which teaches us that only active perception is true perception. The child thirsts for motion, he is compelled to sit still. He assimilates knowledge with remarkable ease when it is presented to him in the lively, active form of a game or work task, (which, if skillfully structured, can be one and the same thing), but he is instructed through lectures and from books. The child is proud of mastering any practical skill, but he is not taught a single one.

From this point of view the labor principle involves active, lively, creative interaction with the world. The kindergarten as conceived by Froebel was the first systematic application of the labor principle and we must demand the appropriate development of instruction according to this same principle, adapted, of course, to each age and to a more extensive range of subject matter for the higher grades.

Another reason modern progressive schools are striving to introduce the labor principle is the direct desire to familiarize pupils with what they will need to know in life, with what plays the dominant role in it at the present time, i.e., with agricultural and industrial labor in all its guises....

People's Commissar for Enlightenment, A. Lunacharsky

*Izvestiia*, October 16, 1918.



## TROTSKY ON THE MILITARY SITUATION AND AN APPEAL TO PETROGRAD WORKERS

October 21, 1918

*Trotsky appeared before the Petrograd Soviet to remind them of the role the industrial workers of Petrograd had played in the building of the Red Army and, after a description of the military situation, to appeal to them to send more men for the Red Army. His speech, as reported in the Petrogradskaia pravda, is a good example of his rhetorical style as well as summary of the military situation facing the Bolsheviks at this time.*

Comrades—Two and a half months ago I made a speech here to the Petrograd Soviet and the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Territory. It was just after we had surrendered Siberia to the Czecho-Slovaks and the White Guards, and five or six days before we surrendered Kazan, one of the saddest moments in the history of our young Soviet Republic, I came here to you from Moscow, where it was decided at a meeting of the Soviet of the People's Commissars, and at party meetings, at a time of danger—grave danger to the Soviet Republic—to return here where this republic was born, to return to Red Petrograd and say to the Petrograd workers, to the Petrograd Soviet, "The threatening hour of trial has come, and we await support from you." I remember, and you all remember, the Petrograd Soviet then unanimously and with true, utmost enthusiasm, which bore witness to its determination, responded to the appeal, and sent hundreds, many hundreds, of the best sons of Petrograd's working class to the front. I was on the Eastern front with them during that month when we

were trying to take Kazan and I watched your representative workers, the comrades from Petrograd.

If we took Kazan, if we took Simbirsk, if we cleared the Volga, it was, in an enormous degree, thanks to those workers whom we sent from here. They created our army there under the enemy's fire. We only sent the raw material there, young men, unconsolidated forces. The living soul had to be poured into them. They had to be welded together, they had to be given self-confidence, a united, centralised command had to be created. The *personnel* for the Command had to be attracted, and, where political control is needed over them, authoritative workers were wanted who would be a guarantee to our soldiers that those in command would not deceive them or bring them into trouble. All this was done by representatives of the Petrograd working class. You took Kazan, you took Simbirsk, you cleared the Volga, you, the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Red Army Deputies!" I reported to you then that, in our War Department, there was not a shadow of doubt but that we could create a strong, forcible, compact army, and a strong navy, perhaps not numerous for the time being while we are cut short in what we can do at sea, but a navy which can be developed when international conditions make that possible, and international conditions are changing every day in our favour. We have created a river flotilla on the Volga, where, as I remarked at our meeting here yesterday, our sailors have fought and are fighting with incomparable heroism. Some vessels of the Baltic fleet, of course only the smaller fighting units, have been transferred there with first-class, hardened, revolutionary crews. There, the White Guard steamers are retreating all down the Volga, they are retreating on the Kama, and now have surrendered the mouth of the river Byelaya. In these battles perished, as I have mentioned, one of the best representatives of the Baltic Fleet, Nikolai Grigoryevich Markin, the founder of our Volga flotilla, second in command to Comrade Raskolnikov.

We created a Red Air Fleet. This is the most delicate form of armament: among the airmen were many elements demoralised by the old Grand Ducal regime, and the profession itself was very aristocratic. The airmen do not live as a corporate body (*artel*), but as individuals, and many of them look down on the army. We were told: "You will not have an air fleet, they will fly over to the enemy." There were cases in which they flew over with their machines; there were cases here on the Northern front where airmen-deserters were caught, and, of course, shot, but I must say that these were isolated cases; they might create a false impression among you as to the actual feeling in our Red [Air] Fleet. We had many heroes in our Red Army, among the infantry and cavalry, and among the sailors, but if you obliged me to award the palm of eminence to anyone I should say that the airmen held the first place in the battles around Kazan. They knew no danger, and they were engaged there under the most incredible conditions. they undertook reconnaissances of the utmost importance for the whole Army in storm and by night; they established a liaison service, and terrorised the enemy by ruthless bombardment.

There fell into our hands the diary of an intelligent White-Guard woman, who lived through all this month of strife in Kazan, and there on every page the work of the Red bandits of the air—that means our airmen—is spoken of with horror and hatred. And now they have been spread out on all the fronts: and on the southern front against the Cossacks our Red airmen will shortly display their strength. I wanted to tell you that our Red Army is spreading itself in all directions, upwards as well. We shall establish a durable, centralised, strong apparatus, morally sound at heart, because the Red Army is bound together with that unity of feeling which the revolutionary representatives of the Petrograd and Moscow proletariat have brought into it. Literally regiments who came from the villages and were but little educated or enlightened have in the course of two or three weeks been morally regenerated under the influence of leading workmen. I remember one group. The picture just now came up before my eyes. It was one of the saddest and most tragic nights before Kazan, when raw, young forces retired in a panic. That was in August, in the first half, when we suffered

reverses. A detachment of Communists arrived: there were over fifty of them, fifty-six, I think. Among them were such as had never had a rifle in their hands before that day. There were men of forty or more, but the majority were boys of eighteen, nineteen or twenty. I remember how one such smooth-faced eighteen-year-old Petrograd Communist appeared at Headquarters at night, rifle in hand, and told us how a regiment had deserted its position and they had taken its place, and he said: "We are Communards." From this detachment of fifty men twelve returned, but, Comrades, they created us an army. It was they who created the army, these Petrograd and Moscow workers, who went to deserted positions in detachments of fifty or sixty men and returned twelve in number. They perished nameless, as the majority of heroes of the working class generally do. Our problem and duty is to endeavour to replace their names again in the memory of the working class. Many perished there and they are no longer known by name, but they create for us that Red Army which defends Soviet Russia and defends the conquests of the working class, that citadel, that fortress of the international revolution which our Soviet Russia now represents. From that time, Comrades, our position became, as you know, incomparably better on the Eastern front, where the danger was the greatest, for the Czecho-Slovaks and White Guards, moving forward from Simbirsk to Kazan, threatened us with a movement on Nijny in one direction, and, in another with one towards Vologda, Yaroslav and Archangel, to join up with the Anglo-French expedition. That is why our chief efforts were directed to the Eastern front, and these efforts gave a good result. The Volga has now been cleared from its source to its mouth. And if the Krasnov bands attempted to cut in again between Tsaritsyn and Astrakhan, near Tsaritsyn, Svetly Yar and Sarepta, well, as you all know, this effort was crushed by our Steppe Army, which overthrew Krasnov's numerous forces, overthrew the manoeuvring battalion of officers, took the staff prisoner, seized all the artillery and, according to the latest information, was pursuing the troops that were fleeing in panic in all directions. The Volga has been freed at Samara and Syzran, and our affairs on the Ural are going incomparably better than they had been going till lately, for, on the Volga, we have freed considerable forces that are moving far on to the East. On the Ural we have approached Orenburg and Ufa after taking Bugulma. The fall of Ufa and Orenburg is a matter for the near future, and Ekaterinburg's fate must be a foregone conclusion.

It is true that while advancing to the East we lengthen our communications, and this always makes more difficulty. But we must take into consideration the fact that while advancing to the East we are seizing important military bases, for the enemy is retiring everywhere in a panic and is leaving at our disposal enormous military stores, and, what is more important, valuable works which serve for the production of munitions. It comes to this that not only we, but our military bases also, are advancing, and our military position is improving, not becoming more difficult.

Archangel and the Murmansk front represented a great danger for us until we became convinced that this expedition could not join hands with the Czecho-Slovaks and the White Guards on the Volga and the Ural. This danger may now be regarded as past. It is true that in their *communiqués* the White Guards say that they have evacuated Kazan, Simbirsk, Volsk, Khvalynsk, Syzran and Samara for strategical reasons, for reasons connected with their operations. We, of course, cannot make any objection to all this dirt having cleared out of all the territory of the Soviet Republic for reasons connected with their operations. But I remember how when they tried to surround our army in Sviyajsk they brought from Samara and Simbirsk some officers' manoeuvring battalions from newly mobilised regiments. Savinkov, Fortunatov and Lebedev marched at the head of these troops to crush our forces that were struggling near Kazan. They were driven off, suffered a defeat, and issued a *communiqué* for the White Guard population: "We fulfilled our task, we retired in complete order in the full sense of the expression." This was not a strategical manoeuvre, but something else—like the panic stricken retreat of whipped hounds. So that there is no ground to fear

that these two fronts will be joined up. And once this is so, then the Archangel front to which we, of course, must give our full attention, ceases to be a threatening front, at any rate for the near future, during the winter months. The White Sea will soon freeze, and communication between the expedition and the English metropolis will be interrupted.

They will have to retire to the Murmansk coast that does not freeze. But it will not be difficult for us in this land of starvation, cut off from England by ice, to crush the English expedition with small forces. There remains the Southern front and to it I direct all the attention of the Petrograd Workers' and Red Army Deputies' Soviet. It is quite natural if, here, you concentrated all your attention on the northern and northeastern fronts, sent your best forces thither and were occupied in sustaining, morally and physically, the forces that are despatched to those parts.

And now, Comrades, we are living in times when the lines of international politics are changing their course with immense, with catastrophic swiftiness. England thought Savinkov's White Guards were stronger than they proved to be. In the French Legation and in the French Embassy (*sic*) I was told that the former French Ambassador, Noulens, just before the Yaroslav revolt summoned Savinkov and told him that on such and such a date he must raise a revolt in Yaroslav. Savinkov answered that this was a hopeless affair. Noulens, in reply, showed him that they must join hands with the Czecho-Slovaks, whose armies were already disintegrating, and therefore, Savinkov's help was essential. Noulens formulated it in this way: "We do not give millions to your organisations in order that you should refuse to do what we want, and when we want it." And then Savinkov organised the Yaroslav revolt.

At that time we were weak, but, nevertheless, the Yaroslav revolt was crushed and all the Entente Missions were swept out of Vologda. A strict revolutionary regime was set up there; the counter-revolutionary plots were cut off in this artery, and the northern operations of the Franco-English Imperialists were uprooted.

They are now turning all their attention to the south, not only because they have suffered defeat in the north and northeast, but, first and foremost, because, for the time being, the inter-relation of forces has changed. Germany had brought to subjection the Balkan Peninsula, Rumania, the Ukraine, Trans-Caucasia, and was trying to effect a dictatorship in the Northern Caucasus.

Now the situation has radically changed, and the Anglo-French and American plunderers have discounted this to begin with. The orientation is now changing in all the Balkan countries. Previously, they were the vassals, the mercenaries, of Germany, now they are making ready to become within twenty-four hours, or twenty-four minutes if required, the subject or half-willing vassals and mercenaries of Anglo-French Imperialism. This has already happened in Bulgaria, it is happening in Turkey, and it may happen tomorrow in Rumania, and it has been for a long time in preparation in the Ukraine. To the landowning and bourgeois classes there, it makes no difference whether Skoropadskyism is on a German or an Anglo-French basis. The Ukraine knows perfectly well that she cannot expect thanks from Skoropadsky, that he will sell Ukrainian land and Ukrainian grain to Germany just as he would to be Anglo-French Imperialists.

Then the Caucasus, too, at present is a place where the endeavours of English Imperialism and the weakening endeavours of German Imperialism are at cross purposes. Baku was seized by the Turks, but there is reason to think that it will pass tomorrow into the hands of the English. After Baku it will be Astrakhan's turn, and then that of Cis-Caucasia. The Krasnovites, who at present are shooting German ammunition from German rifles, will tomorrow aim all their artillery according to the dictates of English Imperialism. Krasnov will carry out these measures without hesitation and in this will unite with Denikin, who continues to carry on Alexeyev's business.

Just now, Comrades, the chief danger threatens us not from the north, and not from the east: those are more distant dangers. The months of this winter will roll by and the spring that follows must come before the danger from the Archangel side becomes a real one, or the Japanese can move their divisions towards old Ural, if their warlike imperialistic pretensions go so far.

The danger in the south is much more immediate; if the Straits are opened by England's and France's Fleets, if an Anglo-French expedition appears on the shores of the Black Sea, this will mean a radical change of Krasnov's front, a change of the whole of the South of Russia, on the signal of danger from the Anglo-French mercenary bands, supported by Russian White Guard bands; this means a blow at Soviet Russia from the south.

Germany is too weak just now to be a menace to us. England and France account themselves sufficiently strong still; they are at present passing through such a period as that which Germany passed through during the Brest-Litovsk negotiations, and the conclusion of the Treaty.

Germany needed six months to fall a victim to her own crimes. England and France, who reached their culmination six months after Germany, require perhaps six or eight weeks, because history works at a feverish rate, and because the patience of the popular masses is being the more exhausted and manifestations of a catastrophe are noticeable in the politics of Imperialism.

It may be hoped that in a few months, and it may be in a few weeks, the Anglo-French will be weaker than at present, but in the next few weeks they are an immediate, direct and menacing enemy to us. This enemy threatens in a much greater degree from the south than from the north, and therefore all our attention must be strained towards the south. Our first and chief problem is, not to allow Krasnov to cross the front, not to give him an opportunity to join hands with the Anglo-French and receive military sustenance from them.

How is this to be achieved? It is very simple: Krasnov's and all these bands must be wiped off the face of the earth in the next two or three weeks. The Ukraine, as you know, during her negotiation with us, refused to define the frontier with us and stated that it was the territory of the Don Republic there and this did not concern Soviet Russia. Now, when we clear the Don Republic of the Krasnov bands, we shall have no frontier with the Ukraine, she herself did not want to have this frontier, and we will seek it in conjunction with the Ukrainian workers and peasants. The evacuation of the Don territory will be a death blow to all Ukrainian bourgeoisie and the counter-revolution of both orientations; to the already waning German orientation because this will be the ruin of Krasnov, to whom Skoropadsky appealed for military help and help in establishing Ukrainian Cossackdom; it will also be ruin to the Anglo-French orientation because it reckoned on Krasnov for the best reasons. In this way it will be a death blow to all the Ukrainian counter-revolution. There can be not a moment's doubt that, when the Red Army regiments enter Rostov and Novocherkask, Soviet barricades will be erected in the streets of Kiev and Odessa. A revolution in the Ukraine, which, of course, we do not regard with indifference—and we shall occupy the post that becomes Soviet Russia—means a mighty concussion for Rumania and the whole Balkan peninsula. Austria, which is now too closely bound up with the Ukraine, if only from the fact that Austrian, as well as German, troops are quartered there, is being more and more drawn into the rapids of the Ukrainian revolution. The knot of European Imperialism, or even of World-Imperialism, is tied in the South of Russia, and especially on the Don front. The knot of the European revolution is tied there, together with it, at the present time, and this knot we must cut in the shortest possible time. We have transferred to that part a sufficient quantity of military forces, we are stronger than our enemy, and we hope to show this very soon indeed, but we need those same Soviet workers whom we had, and have, on the northern and eastern fronts, where, by their work, they secured the victories we have gained. So far there are in

the south but few of you. Petrograd Comrades! There is not yet in the political or military organisation of the administration of the front that revolutionary temper, that hardness and determination, which can only be given to the Red Front by the Petrograd and Moscow proletariat, that with or without rifle says: "I am a representative of the Petrograd Soviet, I am a Communard, and I know my post, which I will not desert, nor will I allow others to desert the posts allotted by the Soviet Republic." I have been again sent to you, to the Petrograd Soviet, to report to you that the centre of attention of the Soviet Republic is now the south, which is farther from you than the north, but which cannot be farther from your political consciousness and your revolutionary preparations; because it is there that the fate of Soviet Russia and the World Revolution is now to be decided. I reported here yesterday to the leading Comrades of Red Petrograd, and they, of course, quite rightly drew my attention to the fact that Petrograd has given many, many forces to all fronts, and everywhere in all the district towns just behind the lines I am always being accosted in the train by some Petrograd or Moscow worker who is now the president of the Executive Committee or of the Extraordinary Commission, or is District Commissar, and holds a whole district in his hands—a youth of nineteen or twenty—and holds it well. I know that you have given many forces, and those not the worst, to all the fronts in the provinces, but still I feel myself too much a man of Petrograd and a member of your Soviet [not] to know your strength and what you can do. I know that Petrograd is a Red hydra; cut off a hundred heads and in their place thousands of new ones will grow. I again come to you and say: Comrades, before the spring thaw which makes the fields impassable to military movements, before the spring thaw which makes the advance difficult, we must achieve decisive operations. We must enter Rostov and Novochoerkask, clear the Don and plant a firm foundation for the predominance of Soviet power in all the Northern Caucasus. From the military point of view, Comrades, we have done all that we could. We now need a firm revolutionary support. Give us your Petrograd proletariat, gladiators, ready to go into fire and water, and carry whole masses with them; ensure our young forces against manifestations of cowardice and hesitation; give us, in a word, true representatives of the Petrograd Soviet, give us dozens, hundreds if you can, of such workers, give us all you can and you will see that we will return in three or four weeks with many of them and will tell you that over Rostov and Novochoerkask floats the Red Standard of the Soviet Republic.

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### CHICHERIN TO PRESIDENT WILSON ON WORLD PEACE AND INTERVENTION IN RUSSIA

October 24, 1918

*The United States occupied a special place in Soviet thinking. While classified as capitalist it was considered less imperialist and less dangerous to Soviet Russia than Britain, France, Japan, or Germany, and even considered a moderating influence on its allies (especially Japan in the Far East). Moreover, President Woodrow Wilson's ideas about world peace, embodied in the Fourteen Points and in his proposal for a League of Nations, intrigued the Soviet leaders. With the European war drawing to an end but civil war in Russia expanding, Chicherin*

*addressed a lengthy note to President Wilson. It is an excellent example of Soviet views at this time as well as of the often counter-productive terms in which they were expressed: jibes about replacing Wilson with the American socialist Eugene Debs certainly reduced chances of the note leading to fruitful discussions.*

Mr. President:

In your message of January 8th to the Congress of the United States of North America, in the sixth point, you spoke of your profound sympathy for Russia, which was then conducting, single-handed, negotiations with the mighty German Imperialism. Your programme, you declared, demands the evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest co-operation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her political development and national policy, and assure her a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and more than a welcome assistance of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. And you added that "the treatment accorded to her by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their goodwill, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy."

The desperate struggle which we were waging at Brest-Litovsk against German Imperialism apparently only intensified your sympathy for Soviet Russia, for you sent greetings to the Congress of the Soviets, which under the threat of a German offensive ratified the Brest peace of violence—greetings and assurances that Soviet Russia might count upon American help.

Six months have passed since then, and the Russian people have had sufficient time to get actual tests of your Government's and your Allies' good-will, of their comprehension of the needs of the Russian people, of their intelligent unselfish sympathy. This attitude of your Government and of your Allies was shown first of all in the conspiracy which was organised on Russian territory with the financial assistance of your French Allies and with the diplomatic co-operation of your Government as well—the conspiracy of the Czecho-Slovaks to whom your Government is furnishing every kind of assistance.

For some time attempts had been made to create a pretext for a war between Russia and the United States of North America by spreading false stories to the effect that German war prisoners had seized the Siberian railway, but your own officers and after them Colonel Robbins, the head of your Red Cross Mission, had been convinced that these allegations were absolutely false. The Czecho-Slovak conspiracy was organised under the slogan that unless these misled unfortunate people be protected, they would be surrendered to Germany and Austria; but you may find out, among other sources, from the open letter of Captain Sadoul, of the French Military Mission, how unfounded this charge is. The Czecho-Slovaks would have left Russia in the beginning of the year, had the French Government provided ships for them. For several months we have waited in vain that your Allies should provide the opportunity for the Czecho-Slovaks to leave. Evidently these Governments have very much preferred the presence of the Czecho-Slovaks in Russia—the results show for what object—to their departure for France and their participation in the fighting on the French frontier. The best proof of the real object of the Czecho-Slovak rebellion is the fact that although in control of the Siberian railway, the Czecho-Slovaks have not taken advantage of this to leave Russia, but by the order of the Entente Governments, whose directions they follow, have remained in Russia to become the mainstay of the Russian counter-revolution. Their counter-revolutionary mutiny which made impossible the transportation of grain and petroleum on the Volga, which cut off the Russian workers and peasants from the Siberian stores of grain and other materials and condemned them to starvation—this was the first



experience of the workers and peasants of Russia with your Government and with your Allies after your promises of the beginning of the year. And then came another experience: an attack on North Russia by Allied Troops, including American troops, their invasion of Russian territory without any cause and without a declaration of war, the occupation of Russian cities and villages, executions of Soviet officials and other acts of violence against the peaceful population of Russia.

You have promised, Mr. President, to co-operate with Russia in order to obtain for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her political development and her national policy. Actually this co-operation took the form of an attempt of the Czecho-Slovak troops and later, in Archangel, Murmansk, and the Far East, of your own and your Allies' troops, to force the Russian people to submit to the rule of the oppressing and exploiting classes, whose dominion was overthrown by the workers and peasants of Russia in October 1917. The revival of the Russian counter-revolution which has already become a corpse, attempts to restore by force its bloody domination over the Russian people—such was the experience of the Russian people, instead of co-operation for the unembarrassed expression of their will which you promised them, Mr. President, in your declarations.

You have also, Mr. President, promised to the Russian people to assist them in their struggle for independence. Actually this is what has occurred while the Russian people were fighting on the Southern front against the counter-revolution, which has betrayed them to the German Imperialism and was threatening their independence: while they were using all their energy to organise the defence of their territory against Germany at their Western frontiers, they were forced to move their troops to the East to oppose the Czecho-Slovaks who were bringing them slavery and oppression, and to the North—against your Allies and your own troops which had invaded their territory, and against the counter-revolutions organised by these troops.

Mr. President, the acid test of the relations between the United States and Russia gave quite different results from those that might have been expected from your message to the Congress. But we have reason not to be altogether dissatisfied with even these results, since the outrages of the counter-revolution in the East and North have shown the workers and peasants of Russia the aims of the Russian counter-revolution and of its foreign supporters, thereby creating among the Russian people an iron will to defend their liberty and the conquests of the revolution, to defend the land that it has given to the peasants and the factories that it has given to the workers. The fall of Kazan, Simbirsk, Syzran, and Samara should make it clear to you, Mr. President, what were the consequences for us of the actions which followed your promises of January 8th. Our trials helped to create a strongly united and disciplined Red Army, which is daily growing stronger and more powerful and which is learning to defend the revolution. The attitude toward us, which was actually displayed by your Government and by your Allies could not destroy us; on the contrary, we are now stronger than we were a few months ago, and your present proposal of international negotiations for a general peace finds us alive and strong and in a position to give in the name of Russia our consent to join the negotiations. In your note to Germany you demand the evacuation of occupied territories as a condition which must precede the armistice during which peace negotiations shall begin. We are ready, Mr. President, to conclude an armistice on these conditions, and we ask you to notify us when you, Mr. President, and your Allies intend to remove troops from Murmansk, Archangel and Siberia. You refuse to conclude an armistice, unless Germany will stop the outrages, pillaging, etc., during the evacuation of occupied territories. We allow ourselves therefore to draw the conclusion that you and your Allies will order the Czecho-Slovaks to return the part of our gold reserve fund which they seized in Kazan, that you will forbid them to continue as heretofore their acts of pillaging

and outrage against the workers and peasants during their forced departure (for we will encourage their speedy departure, without waiting for your order).

With regard to other peace terms, namely, that the Governments which would conclude peace must express the will of their people, you are aware that our Government fully satisfies this condition, our Government expresses the will of the Councils of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies, representing at least eighty per cent of the Russian people. This cannot, Mr. President, be said about your Government. But for the sake of humanity and peace we do not demand as a prerequisite of general peace negotiations that all nations participating in the negotiations shall be represented by Councils of People's Commissars, elected at a Congress of Councils of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies. We know that this form of Government will soon be the general form, and that precisely a general peace, when nations will no more be threatened with defeat, will leave them free to put an end to the system and the clique that forced upon mankind this universal slaughter, and which will, in spite of themselves, surely lead the tortured peoples to create Soviet Governments, which give exact expression to their will.

Agreeing to participate at present in negotiations with even such Governments as do not yet express the will of the people we would like on our part to find out from you, Mr. President, in detail what is your conception of the League of Nations, which you propose as the crowning work of peace. You demand the independence of Poland, Serbia, Belgium, and freedom for the peoples of Austria-Hungary. You probably mean by this that the masses of the people must everywhere first become the masters of their own fate in order to unite afterwards in a league of free nations. But strangely enough, we do not find among your demands the liberation of Ireland, Egypt, or India, nor even the liberation of the Philippines, and we would be very sorry to learn that these people should be denied the opportunity to participate together with us, through their freely elected representatives, in the organisation of the League of Nations.

We would also, Mr. President, very much like to know, before the negotiations with regard to the formation of a League of Nations have begun, what is your conception of the solution of many economic questions which are essential for the cause of future peace. You do not mention the war expenditures—this unbearable burden, which the masses would have to carry, unless the League of Nations should renounce payments on the loans to the capitalists of all countries. You know as well as we, Mr. President, that this war is the outcome of the policies of all capitalist nations, that the Governments of all countries were continually piling up armaments, that the ruling groups of all civilised nations pursued a policy of annexations, and that it would, therefore, be extremely unjust if the masses, having paid for these policies with millions of lives and with economic ruin, should yet pay to those who are really responsible for the war a tribute for their policies which resulted in all these countless miseries.

We propose, therefore, Mr. President, the annulment of the war loans as the basis of the League of Nations. As to the restoration of the countries that were laid waste by the war, we believe it is only just that all nations should aid for this purpose the unfortunate Belgium, Poland and Serbia, and however poor and ruined Russia seems to be, she is ready on her part to do everything she can to help these victims of the war, and she expects that American capital, which has not at all suffered from this war, and has even made billions in profits out of it, will do its part to help these peoples.

But the League of Nations should not only liquidate the present war, but also make impossible any wars in the future. You must be aware, Mr. President, that the capitalists of your country are planning to apply in the future the same policies of encroachment and of super-profits in China and Siberia, and that, fearing competition from Japanese capitalists, they are preparing a military force to overcome the resistance which they meet from Japan.

You are no doubt aware of similar plans of the capitalist ruling circles of other countries with regard to other territories and other peoples. Knowing this, you will have to agree with us that the factories, mines and banks must not be left in the hands of private persons who have always made use of the vast means of production created by the masses of the people to export products and capital to foreign countries in order to reap super-profits in return for the benefits forced on them, their struggle for spoils resulting in imperialist wars. We propose, therefore, Mr. President, that the League of Nations be based on the expropriation of the capitalists of all countries. In your country, Mr. President, the banks and the industries are in the hands of such a small group of capitalists that, as your personal friend, Colonel Robbins, assured us, the arrest of twenty heads of capitalist cliques and the transfer of the control, which by characteristic capitalist methods they have come to possess, into the hands of the masses of the people is all that would be required to destroy the principal sources of new wars.

If you will agree to this, Mr. President—if the source of future wars will thus be destroyed, then there can be no doubt that it would be easy to remove all economic barriers and that all peoples, controlling their means of production, will be vitally interested in exchanging the things they do not need for the things they need. It will then be a question of an exchange of products between nations, each of which produces what it can best produce, and the League of Nations will be a league of mutual aid of the toiling masses. It will then be easy to reduce the armed forces to the limit necessary for the maintenance of internal safety.

We know very well that the selfish capitalist class will attempt to create this internal menace, just as the Russian landlords and capitalists are now attempting with the aid of American, English, and French armed forces to take the factories from the workers and the land from the peasants. But, if the American workers, inspired by your idea of a League of Nations, will crush the resistance of the Russian capitalists, then neither the German nor any other capitalists will be a serious menace to the victorious working class, and it will then suffice, if every member of the commonwealth, working six hours in the factory, spends two hours daily for several months in learning the use of arms, so that the whole people will know how to overcome the internal menace.

And so, Mr. President, though we have had experience with your promises, we nevertheless accept as a basis your proposals about peace and about a League of Nations. We have tried to develop them in order to avoid results which would contradict your promises, as was the case with your promise of assistance to Russia. We have tried to formulate with precision your proposals on the League of Nations in order that the League of Nations should not turn out to be a league of capitalists against the nations. Should you not agree with us, we have no objection to an "open discussion of your peace terms," as your first point of your peace programme demands. If you will accept our proposals as a basis, we will easily agree on the details.

But there is another possibility. We have had dealings with the President of the Archangel attack and the Siberian invasion and we have also had dealings with the President of the League of Nations Peace Programme. Is not the first of these—the real President actually directing the policies of the American capitalist Government? Is not the American Government rather a Government of the American corporations, of the American industrial, commercial, and railroad trusts, of the American banks—in short, a Government of the American capitalist? And is it not possible that the proposals of this Government about the creation of a League of Nations will result in new chains for the peoples, in the organisation of an International trust for the exploitation of the workers and the suppression of weak nations? In this latter case, Mr. President, you will not be in a position to reply to our questions, and we will say to the workers of all countries: Beware! Millions of your brothers, thrown at each others' throats by the bourgeoisie of all countries are still perishing on the battlefields and the capitalist leaders are already trying to come to an understanding for the

purpose of suppressing with united forces those that remain alive, when they call to account the criminals who caused the war!

However, Mr. President, since we do not at all desire to wage war against the United States, even though your Government has not yet been replaced by a Council of People's Commissars and your post is not yet taken by Eugene Debs, whom you have imprisoned; since we do not at all desire to wage war against England, even though the cabinet of Mr. Lloyd George has not yet been replaced by a Council of People's Commissars with MacLean at its head; since we have no desire to wage war against France, even though the capitalist Government of Clemenceau has not yet been replaced by a workers' Government of Merheim, just as we have concluded peace with the imperialist Government of Germany, with Emperor Wilhelm at its head, whom you, Mr. President, hold in no greater esteem than we, the Workers' and Peasants' Revolutionary Government, hold you, we finally propose to you, Mr. President, that you take up with your Allies the following questions and give us precise and businesslike replies: Do the Governments of the United States, England and France intend to cease demanding the blood of the Russian people and lives of Russian citizens, if the Russian people will agree to pay them a ransom, such as a man who has been suddenly attacked pays to the one who attacked him? If so just what tribute do the Governments of the United States, England and France demand of the Russian people? Do they demand concessions, that the railways, mines, gold deposits etc. shall be handed over to them on certain conditions, or do they demand territorial concessions, some part of Siberia, or Caucasia, or perhaps the Murmansk coast?

We expect from you, Mr. President, that you will definitely state what you and your Allies demand, and also whether the alliance between your Government and the Governments of the other Entente Powers is in the nature of a combination which could be compared with a corporation for drawing dividends from Russia, or does your Government and the other Governments of the Entente Powers have each separate and special demands, and what are they? Particularly are we interested to know the demands of your French Allies with regard to the three billions of roubles which the Paris bankers loaned to the Government of the Tsar—the oppressor of Russia and the enemy of his own people? And you, Mr. President, as well as your French Allies surely know that even if you and your Allies should succeed in enslaving and covering with blood the whole territory of Russia—which will not be allowed by our heroic revolutionary Red Army—that even in that case the Russian people, worn out by the war and not having sufficient time to take advantage of the benefits of the Soviet rule to elevate their national economy, will be unable to pay the French bankers the full tribute for the billions that were used by the Government of the Tsar for purposes injurious to the people. Do your French Allies demand that a part of this tribute be paid in instalments, and if so, what part, and do they anticipate that their claims will result in similar claims by other creditors of the infamous Government of the Tsar which has been overthrown by the Russian people? We can hardly think that your Government and your Allies are without a ready answer, when your and their troops are trying to advance on our territory with the evident object of seizing and enslaving our country.

The Russian people through the People's Red Army are guarding their territory and are bravely fighting against your invasion and against the attack of your Allies. But your Government and the Governments of the other powers of the Entente undoubtedly have well prepared plans, for the sake of which you are shedding the blood of your soldiers. We expect that you will state your demands very clearly and definitely. Should we, however, be disappointed, should you fail to reply to our quite definite and precise questions, we will draw the only possible conclusion—that we are justified in the assumption that your Government and the Governments of your Allies desire to get from the Russian people a tribute both in money and in natural resources of Russia, and territorial concessions as well. We will tell

this to the Russian people as well as to the toiling masses of other countries, and the absence of a reply from you will serve for us as a silent reply. The Russian people will then understand that the demands of your Government and of the Governments of your Allies are so severe and vast that you do not even want to communicate them to the Russian Government.

*The Soviet Union and Peace*, pp. 48-57.



## THE LABOR LAWS AND COMPULSORY LABOR DUTY

October 31, 1918

*Soviet labor policies mixed control and mobilization policies with rules designed to protect the rights of workers in a way that observers usually have found confusing. This was reflected already in the first general labor law. Mobilization of labor was a recurring problem and theme of 1918-1919, growing out of both Bolshevik ideology and economic pressures of the time. Various measures had been taken to bind workers to specific jobs, insure productivity, and compel labor by certain social classes. This tendency is reflected especially in Article I, "On Compulsory Labor," and in Article IX, "Methods to Assure Efficiency of Labor," but is also found in other provisions. The law also made "labor books," first introduced as a measure against the bourgeoisie, universal. These were to become a permanent feature of Soviet life and an important control mechanism (compare the relatively benign economic record role described for them here with the more extensive roles introduced soon afterwards by a decree of June 25, 1919, below). Along with these control and mobilization features the law also spelled out some of the labor welfare policies which were a part of the Bolshevik ideology: guarantees of the right to work, vacations, sick leave, and various other provisions intended to protect the rights of workers. The appendices referred to in the text are not included except for No. 80, Labor Booklets, and a portion of No. 104 dealing with holidays.*

## THE CODE OF LABOR LAWS

### Introduction

I. The Code of Labor Laws shall take effect from the moment of its publication in the *Compilation of Laws and Regulations of the Workers' and Peasants' Government*. This Code must be extensively circulated among the working class of the country by all the local organs of the Soviet Government and be posted in a conspicuous place in all Soviet Institutions.

II. The regulations of the Code of Labor Laws shall apply to all persons receiving remuneration for their work and shall be obligatory for all enterprises, institutions and establishments (Soviet, public, private and domestic), as well as for all private employers exploiting labor.

III. All existing regulations of a general character and those hereafter to be issued in relation to labor, (orders of individual establishments, instructions, rules of internal management, etc.), as well as individual contracts and agreements, shall be valid only in so far as they do not conflict with this Code.

IV. All labor agreements previously entered into, as well as all those which will be entered into in the future, in so far as they contradict the regulations of this Code, shall not be considered valid or obligatory, either for the employees or for the employers.

V. In enterprises and establishments where the work is carried on in the form of organized cooperation (Section 6, Division (a) of the present Labor-Code) the wage earners must be allowed the widest possible self-government under the supervision of the Central Soviet authorities. On this basis alone can the working masses be successfully educated in the spirit of socialist and communal government.

VI. The labor conditions in the communal enterprises organized as well as supported by the Soviet institutions (agricultural and other communes) are regulated by special rules of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and of the Council of People's Commissars, and by instructions of the People's Commissariats of Agriculture and Labor.

The labor conditions of farmers on land assigned them for cultivation are regulated by the Code of Rural Laws.

The labor conditions of independent artisans are regulated by special rules of the Commissariat of Labor.

## ARTICLE I

### On Compulsory Labor

1. All citizens of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, with the exception stated in sections 2 and 3, shall be subject to compulsory labor.

2. The following persons shall be exempt from compulsory labor:

(a) Persons under 16 years of age;

(b) All persons over 50 years;

(c) Persons who have become incapacitated by injury or illness.

3. Temporarily exempt from compulsory labor are:

(a) Persons who are temporarily incapacitated owing to illness or injury, for a period necessary for their recovery;

(b) Women, for a period of 8 weeks before and 8 weeks after confinement.

4. All students shall be subject to compulsory labor at the schools.

5. The fact of permanent or temporary disability shall be certified after a medical examination by the Bureau of Medical Survey in the city, district or province, by the accident insurance office or its agencies, according to the place of residence of the person whose disability is to be certified.

Note I. Rules for the examination of disabled workers are appended hereto.

Note II. Persons subject to compulsory labor but not engaged in useful public work may be summoned by the local Soviets for the execution of public work, on conditions determined by the Department of Labor in agreement with the local Soviets of trade unions.

6. Labor may be performed in the form of—

(a) Organized cooperation;

(b) Individual personal services;

(c) Individual special jobs.

7. Labor conditions in Government (Soviet) establishments shall be regulated by tariff rules approved by the Central Soviet authorities through the People's Commissariat of Labor.

8. Labor conditions in all establishments (Soviet, nationalized, public and private) shall be regulated by tariff rules drafted by the trade unions, in agreement with the directors or owners of establishments and enterprises, and approved by the People's Commissariat of Labor.

Note. In cases where it is impossible to arrive at an understanding with the directors or owners of establishments or enterprises, the tariff rules shall be drawn up by the trade unions and submitted for approval to the People's Commissariat of Labor.

9. Labor in the form of individual personal service or in the form of individual special jobs shall be regulated by tariff rules drafted by the respective trade unions and approved by the People's Commissariat of Labor.

## ARTICLE II

## The Right to Work

10. All citizens able to work have the right to employment at their vocations and for remuneration fixed for such class of work.

Note. The District Exchange Bureaus of the Department of Labor Distribution may, by agreement with the respective unions, assign individual wage earners or groups of them to work at other trades if there is no demand for labor at the vocations of the persons in question.

11. The right to work belongs first of all to those who are subject to compulsory labor.

12. Of the classes exempt from compulsory labor, only those mentioned in subdivision "b" of Section 2 shall have the right to work.

13. Those mentioned in subdivisions "a" and "c" of Section 2 shall absolutely have no right to work, and those mentioned in Section 3 shall temporarily have no right to work.

14. All persons of the female sex, and those of the male sex under 18 years of age, shall have no right to work during night time or in those branches of industry where the conditions of labor are especially hard or dangerous.

Note. A list of especially hard and health-endangering occupations shall be prepared by the Department of Labor Protection of the People's Commissariat of Labor, and shall be published in the month of January of each year in the *Compilation of Laws and Regulations of the Workers' and Peasants' Government*.

## ARTICLE III

## Methods of Labor Distribution

15. The enforcement of the right to work shall be secured through the Department of Labor Distribution, through trade unions, and through all the institutions of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic.

16. The assignment of wage earners to work shall be effected through the Department of Labor Distribution.

17. A wage earner may be summoned to work, save by the Department of Labor Distribution, only when chosen for a position by a Soviet institution or enterprise.

18. Vacancies may be filled by election when the work offered requires political reliability or unusual special knowledge, for which the person elected is noted.

19. Persons engaged for work by election must register with the Department of Labor Distribution before they are accepted, but they shall not be subject to the rules concerning probation which are set forth in Article IV of the present Code.

20. Unemployed persons shall be assigned to work through the Department of Labor Distribution in the manner stated in Sections 21-30.

21. A wage earner who is not engaged in work at his vocation shall register with the local Department of Labor Distribution as unemployed.

22. Establishments and individuals in need of workers shall apply to the local Department of Labor Distribution or its division (Correspondence Bureau) stating the condition of the work offered as well as the requirements which the workers must meet (trade, knowledge, experience).

23. The Department of Labor Distribution, on receipt of the application mentioned in Section 22, shall assign the persons meeting the requirements thereof in the order determined by the same.

24. An unemployed person has no right to refuse an offer to work at his vocation, provided the working conditions conform with the standards fixed by the respective tariff regulations, or in the absence of the same by the trade unions.

25. A wage worker assigned to work for a period of not more than two weeks, shall be considered unemployed, and shall not lose his place on the list of the Department of Labor Distribution.

26. Should the local Department of Labor Distribution have no workers on its lists meeting the stated requirements, the application shall be immediately sent to the District Exchange Bureau, and the establishment or individual offering the employment shall be simultaneously notified to this effect.

27. Whenever workers are required for work outside of their district, a roll-call of the unemployed registered with the Department of Labor Distribution shall take place, to ascertain who are willing to go; if a sufficient number of such should not be found, the Department of Labor Distribution shall assign the lacking number from among the unemployed in the order of their registration, provided that those who have dependents must be given preference before single persons.

28. If in the Department of Labor Distribution, within the limits of the district, there be no workers meeting the requirements, the District Exchange Bureau has the right, upon agreement with the respective trade union, to send unemployed from another class approaching as nearly as possible the trade required.

29. An unemployed person who is offered work outside his vocation shall be obliged to accept it, with the understanding, if he so desires, that this be only temporary, until he receives work at his vocation.

30. A wage earner who is working outside his vocation, and who has expressed the desire that this be only temporary, shall retain his place on the register of the Department of Labor Distribution until he secures work at his vocation.

31. Private individuals violating the rules of labor distribution set forth in this article shall be punished, by order of the local board of the Department of Labor Distribution, by a fine of not less than 300 rubles or by arrest for not less than one week. Soviet establishments and officials violating these rules of labor distributions shall be liable to criminal prosecution.

#### ARTICLE IV

##### Probation Period

32. Final acceptance of workers for permanent employment shall be preceded by a period of probation of not more than six days; in Soviet institutions the probation period shall be two weeks for unskilled and less responsible work and one month for skilled and responsible work.

33. According to the results of the probation the wage earner shall either be given a permanent appointment, or rejected with payment for the period of probation in accordance with the tariff rates.

34. The results of the probation (acceptance or rejection) shall be communicated to the Department of Labor Distribution.

35. Up to the expiration of the probation period, the wage earner shall be considered as unemployed, and shall retain his place on the eligible list of the Department of Labor Distribution.

36. A person who, after probation, has been rejected, may appeal from this decision to the union of which he is a member.

37. If the trade union deems the appeal mentioned in the preceding section justified, it shall enter into negotiations with the establishment or person who has rejected the wage earner, with the request that the complainant be accepted.

38. In case of failure of the negotiations mentioned in Section 37, the matter shall be submitted to the local Department of Labor, whose decision shall be final and subject to no further appeal.

39. The Department of Labor may demand that the person or establishment who have without sufficient reason rejected a wage earner provide the latter with work. Furthermore, it may demand that the said person or establishment compensate the wage earner according



to the tariff rates for the time lost between his rejection and final acceptance pursuant to the decision of the Department of Labor.

#### ARTICLE V

##### Transfer and Discharge of Wage Earners

40. Transfer of wage earners in all enterprises, establishments, or institutions employing paid labor is allowed only if required in the interest of the business and by the decision of the proper organ of management.

Note. This rule does not apply to work with private individuals employing paid labor, if the work is of the character mentioned in subdivisions "b" and "c" of Section 6.

41. The transfer of a wage earner to other work within the enterprise, establishment or institution where he is employed may be ordered by the management of said enterprise, establishment or institution.

42. The transfer of a wage earner to another enterprise, establishment or institution situated in the same or in another locality, may be ordered by the corresponding organ of management with the consent of the Department of Labor Distribution.

43. The order of the management for the transfer of a wage earner in accordance with Section 40 may be appealed to the proper Department of Labor (local or district) by the interested individuals or organizations.

44. The decision of the Department of Labor in the matter of the transfer of a wage earner may be appealed by the interested parties to the District Department of Labor or to the People's Commissariat of Labor, whose decision in the matter in dispute is final and not subject to further appeal.

45. In case of urgent public work the District Department of Labor may, in agreement with the respective trade unions and with the approval of the People's Commissariat of Labor, order the transfer of a whole group of wage earners from the organization where they are employed to another situated in the same or in a different locality, provided a sufficient number of volunteers for such work cannot be found.

46. The discharge of wage earners from an enterprise, establishment or institution where they have been employed is permissible in the following cases:

- (a) In case of complete or partial liquidation of the enterprise, establishment or institution, or of cancellation of specific orders or work;
- (b) In case of suspension of work for more than a month;
- (c) Upon the expiration of the term of employment or the completion of the job, if the work was of a temporary character;
- (d) In case of evident unfitness for work, by special decision of the management and subject to agreement with the respective trade unions;
- (e) By request of the wage earner.

47. The management of the enterprise, establishment or institution where a wage earner is employed, or the person for whom a wage earner is working must give the wage earner two weeks' notice of the proposed discharge, for the reasons stated in subdivisions "a", "b" and "d" of Section 46, notifying simultaneously the local Department of Labor Distribution.

48. A wage earner discharged for the reasons stated in subdivisions "a", "b" and "d" of Section 46 shall be considered unemployed and entered as such on the lists of the Department of Labor Distribution and shall continue to perform his work until the expiration of the term of two weeks mentioned in the preceding section.

49. The order to discharge an employee for the reasons stated in subdivisions "a", "b" and "d" of Section 46 may be appealed by the interested persons to the Local Department of Labor.

50. The decision of the Local Department of Labor in the matter of discharge may be appealed by either party to the District Department of Labor, whose decision on the question in dispute is final and not subject to further appeal.

51. Discharge by request of the wage earner from an enterprise, establishment or institution must be preceded by an examination of the reasons for the resignation by the respective organ of workers' self-government (works and other committees).

Note. This rule does not apply to the resignation of a wage earner employed by an individual, if the work is of the character mentioned in subdivisions "b" and "c" of Section 6.

52. If the organ of workers' self-government (works or other committee) after investigating the reasons for the resignation finds the same unjustified the wage earner must remain at work, but may appeal from the decision of the committee to the proper trade union.

53. A wage earner who quits work contrary to the decision of the Committee made pursuant to Section 52, shall forfeit for one week the right to register with the Department of Labor Distribution.

54. Institutions and persons employing paid labor shall, whenever a wage earner quits work, inform thereof the Local Department of Labor Distribution and the trade union of which the wage earner is a member, stating the date and the reason thereof.

## ARTICLE VI

### Remuneration of Labor

55. The remuneration of wage earners for work in enterprises, establishments and institutions employing paid labor, and the particular conditions and manner of payment shall be fixed by tariffs worked out for each kind of labor in the manner described in Sections 7-9 of the present Code.

56. All institutions working out the tariff rates must comply with the provisions of this article of the Code of Labor Laws.

57. For the purpose of fixing the tariff rates and determining the standard rates of remuneration, all the wage earners of a trade shall be divided into groups and categories and a definite standard of remuneration shall be fixed for each of them.

58. The standard of remuneration fixed by the tariff rates must be at least sufficient to provide for the minimum living expenses as determined by the People's Commissariat of Labor for each district of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic and published in the *Compilation of Laws and Regulations of the Workers' and Peasants' Government*.

59. In determining the standard of remuneration for each group and category attention shall be given to the kind of labor, the danger of the conditions under which the work is performed, the complexity and accuracy of the work, the degree of independence and responsibility as well as the standard of education and experience required for the performance of the work.

60. The remuneration of each wage earner shall be determined by his classification in a definite group and category.

61. The classification of wage earners into groups and categories within each branch of labor shall be done by special valuation commissions, local and central, established by the respective trade unions.

Note. The procedure of the valuation commissions shall be determined by the People's Commissariat of Labor.

62. The tariff regulations shall fix the standard of remuneration for a normal working day or for piece work, and particularly the remuneration for overtime work.

63. Remuneration for piecework shall be computed by dividing the daily tariff rate by the number of pieces constituting the production standard.

64. The standard of remuneration fixed for overtime work shall not exceed time and a half of the normal remuneration.

65. Excepting the remuneration paid for overtime work done in the same or in a different branch of labor, no additional remuneration in excess of the standard fixed for a given

group and category shall be permitted, irrespective of the pretext and form under which it might be offered and whether it be paid in only one or in several places of employment.

66. Persons working in several places must state in which place of employment they desire to receive their pay.

67. Any person receiving excessive remuneration, in violation of Section 65, shall be liable to criminal prosecution for fraud, and the remuneration received in excess of the standard may be deducted from subsequent payments to such a person.

68. From the remuneration of the wage earner may be deducted the excess remuneration received in violation of Section 65, and the remuneration earned by the wage earner during his vacation; deduction may also be made for cessation of work.

69. No other deductions, except those mentioned in Section 68, shall be permitted, irrespective of the form or pretext under which they might be made.

70. Payment of remuneration must not be made in advance.

71. If the work is permanent, payment for the same must be made periodically, at least once in every fortnight. Remuneration for temporary work and for special jobs, provided the same continue at least for two weeks, shall be paid immediately after the work has been completed.

72. Payments shall be made in money or in kind (lodgings, food supplies, etc.).

73. To make payments in kind special permission must be obtained from the Local Department of Labor which shall determine the rates jointly with the respective trade unions.

Note. The rates thus determined must be based on the standard prices fixed by the respective institutions of the Soviet authority (valuation commissions of the Commissariat of Food, Land and Housing Department, Price Committee, etc.).

74. Payments must be made during working hours.

75. Payments must be made at the place of work.

76. The wage earner shall be paid only for actual work done. If a cessation of work is caused during the working day by circumstances beyond the control of the wage earner (through accident or through the fault of the administration), he shall be paid for the time lost, on the basis of the daily tariff rates, if he is employed on time work, or on the basis of his average daily earnings if he is employed on piece work.

77. A wage earner shall be paid his wage during leave of absence (Sections 106-107).

78. During illness of a wage earner the remuneration due him shall be paid as a subsidy from the hospital fund.

Note. The manner of payment of the subsidy is fixed by rules appended hereto.

79. The unemployed shall receive a subsidy out of the fund for unemployed.

Note. Rules concerning the unemployed and the payment of subsidies to them are appended hereto.

80. Every wage earner must have a labor booklet in which all matters pertaining to the work done by him, as well as the payments and subsidies received by him are to be entered.

Note. Rules regarding labor booklets for wage earners are appended hereto.

## ARTICLE VII

### Working Hours

81. Working hours shall be regulated by rules made for each kind of labor, in the manner described in Sections 7-9 of the present Code.

82. The rules relating to working hours must conform with the provisions of this article of the Code of Labor Laws.

83. A normal working day shall mean the time fixed by the tariff regulations for the production of a certain amount of work.

84. The duration of a normal working day must in no case exceed eight hours for day work and seven hours for night work.

85. The duration of a normal day must not exceed six hours:

(a) for persons under 18 years of age, and

(b) in especially hard or health-endangering branches of industry (note to Section 14 of the present Code).

86. During the normal working day time must be allowed for meals and for rest.

87. During recess machines, beltings and lathes must be stopped, unless this be impossible owing to technical conditions or in cases where these machines, beltings, etc., serve for ventilations, drainage, lighting, etc.

88. The time of recess fixed by Section 86 is not included in the working hours.

89. The recess must take place not later than four hours after the beginning of the working day, and must continue not less than a half hour and not more than two hours.

Note. Additional intermissions every three hours, and for not less than a half hour, must be allowed for working women who are nursing children.

90. The wage earners may use their free time at their own discretion. They shall be allowed during recess to leave the place of work.

91. In case the nature of the work requires a working day in excess of the normal, two or more shifts shall be engaged.

92. Where there are several shifts, each shift shall work the normal working hours; the change of shifts must take place during the time fixed by the rules of the internal management without interfering with the normal course of work.

93. As a general rule, work in excess of the normal hours (overtime work) shall not be permitted.

94. Overtime work may be permitted in the following exceptional cases:

(a) Where the work is necessary for the prevention of a public calamity or in case the existence of the Soviet Government of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic or human life is endangered;

(b) In emergency public work connected with water supply, lighting, sewerage or transportation, in case of accident or extraordinary interruption of their regular operation;

(c) When work has to be completed which owing to unforeseen or accidental delay due to technical conditions of production could not be completed during the normal working hours, if leaving the work unfinished would cause damage to materials or machinery;

(d) On repairs or renewal of machine parts or construction work, wherever necessary to prevent stoppage of work by a considerable number of wage earners.

95. In the case described in subdivision "c" of Section 94, overtime work is permissible only with the consent of the respective trade union.

96. For overtime work described in subdivision "d" of Section 94 permission must be obtained from the local labor inspection, in addition to the permit mentioned in the preceding section.

97. No females and no males under 18 years of age may do any overtime work.

98. The time spent on overtime work in the course of two consecutive days must not exceed 4 hours.

99. No overtime work shall be permitted to make up for a wage earner's tardiness in reporting at his place of work.

100. All overtime work done by a wage earner, as well as the remuneration received by him for the same, must be recorded in his labor booklet.

101. The total number of days on which overtime may be permitted in any enterprise, establishment or institution must not exceed 50 days per annum, including such days when even one wage earner worked overtime.

102. Every enterprise, establishment or institution must keep a special record book for overtime work.

103. All wage earners must be allowed a weekly uninterrupted rest of not less than 42 hours.

104. No work shall be done on specially designated holidays.

Note. Rules concerning holidays and days of weekly rest are appended hereto.

105. On the eve of rest days the normal working day shall be reduced by two hours.

Note. This section shall not apply to institutions and enterprises where the working day does not exceed six hours.

106. Every wage earner who has worked without interruption not less than six months shall be entitled to leave of absence for two weeks, irrespective of whether he worked in only one or in several enterprises, establishments or institutions.

107. Every wage earner who has worked without interruption not less than a year shall be entitled to leave of absence for one month, irrespective of whether he worked in only one or in several enterprises, establishments or institutions.

Note. Sections 106 and 107 shall take effect beginning January 1, 1919.

108. Leave of absence may be granted during the whole year, provided that the same does not interfere with the normal course of work in the enterprise, establishment or institution.

109. The time and order in which leave of absence may be granted shall be determined by agreement between the management of the enterprise, establishment or institution and proper self-government bodies of the wage earners (works and other committees).

110. A wage earner shall not be at liberty to work for remuneration during his leave of absence.

111. The remuneration of a wage earner earned during his leave of absence shall be deducted from his regular wages.

112. The absence of a wage earner from work caused by special circumstances and permitted by the manager shall not be counted as leave of absence; the wage earner shall not be paid for the working hours lost in such cases.

## ARTICLE VIII

### Methods to Assure Efficiency of Labor

113. In order to assure efficiency of labor, every wage earner working in an enterprise, establishment or institution (governmental, public or private) employing labor in the form of organized cooperation, as well as the administration of the enterprise, establishment or institution, shall strictly observe the rules of this article of the Code relative to standards of efficiency, output and rules of internal management.

114. Every wage earner must during a normal working day and under normal working conditions perform the standard amount of work fixed for the category and group in which he is enrolled.

Note. Normal conditions referred to in this section, shall mean:

- (a) Good condition of machines, lathes and accessories;
- (b) Timely delivery of materials and tools necessary for the performance of the work;
- (c) Good quality of materials and tools;
- (d) Proper hygienic and sanitary equipment of the building where the work is performed (necessary lighting, heating, etc.).

115. The standard output for wage earners of each trade and of each group and category shall be fixed by valuation commissions of the respective trade unions (Section 62).

116. In determining the standard output the valuation commission shall take into consideration the quantity of products usually turned out in the course of a normal working day and under normal technical conditions by the wage earners of the particular trade, group and category.

117. The production standards of output adopted by the valuation commission must be approved by the proper Department of Labor jointly with the Council of National Economy.

118. A wage earner systematically producing less than the fixed standard may be transferred by decision of the proper valuation commission to other work in the same group and category, or to a lower group or category, with a corresponding reduction of wages.

Note. The wage earner may appeal from the decision to transfer him to a lower group or category with a reduction of wages, to the local Department of Labor and from the decision of the latter to the District Department of Labor, whose decision shall be final and not subject to further appeal.

119. If a wage earner's failure to maintain the standard output is due to lack of good faith and to negligence on his part, he may be discharged in the manner set forth in subdivision "d" of Section 46 without the two weeks notice prescribed by Section 47.

120. The Supreme Council of National Economy jointly with the People's Commissariat of Labor may direct a general increase or decrease of the standards of efficiency and output for all wage earners and for all enterprises, establishments and institutions of a given district.

121. In addition to the regulations of the present article relative to standards of efficiency and output in enterprises, establishments and institutions, efficiency of labor shall be secured by rules of internal management.

122. The rules of internal management in Soviet institutions shall be made by the organs of Soviet authority with the approval of the People's Commissariat of Labor or its local departments.

123. The rules of internal management in industrial enterprises and establishments (Soviet, nationalized, private and public) shall be made by the trade unions and certified by the proper Departments of Labor.

124. The rules of internal management must include clear, precise and, as far as possible, exhaustive directions in relation to—

(a) The general obligations of all wage earners (careful handling of all materials and tools, compliance with instructions of the managers regarding performance of work, observance of the fixed standard of working hours, etc.);

(b) The special duties of the wage earners of the particular branch of industry (careful handling of the fire in enterprises using inflammable materials, observance of special cleanliness in enterprises producing food products, etc.);

(c) The limits and manner of liability for breach of the duties mentioned above in subdivisions "a" and "b".

125. The enforcement of the rules of internal management in Soviet institutions is entrusted to the responsible managers.

126. The enforcement of the rules of internal management in industrial enterprises and establishments (Soviet, nationalized, public or private) is entrusted to the self-government bodies of the wage earners (works or similar committees).

## ARTICLE IX

### Protection of Labor

127. Protection of the life, health and labor of persons engaged in any economic activity is entrusted to the labor inspection, the technical inspectors and the representatives of sanitary inspection.

128. The labor inspection is under the jurisdiction of the People's Commissariat of Labor and its local branches (Departments of Labor) and is composed of elected labor inspectors.

129. Labor inspectors shall be elected by the Councils of Trade Unions.

Note I. The manner of election of labor inspectors shall be determined by the People's Commissariat of Labor.

Note II. In districts where there is no Council of Trade Unions, the Local Department of Labor shall summon a conference of representatives of the trade unions which shall elect the labor inspectors.

130. In performing the duties imposed upon them concerning the protection of the lives and health of wage earners the officers of labor inspection shall enforce the regulations of the present Code, and the decrees, instructions, orders and other acts of the Soviet authority intended to safeguard the lives and health of the workers.

131. For the attainment of the purposes stated in Section 130 the officers of labor inspection are authorized—

(a) To visit at any time of the day or night all the industrial enterprises of their districts and all places where work is carried on, as well as the buildings provided for the workers by the enterprise (rooming houses, hospitals, asylums, baths, etc.);

(b) To require the managers of enterprises or establishments, as well as the elective officials of the wage earners (works and similar committees) of those enterprises or establishments in the management of which they are participating, to produce all necessary books, records and information;

(c) To draw to the work of inspection representatives of the elective organizations of employees, as well as officials of the administration (managers, superintendents, foremen, etc.);

(d) To bring before the criminal court all violators of the regulations of the present Code, or of the decrees, instructions, orders and other acts of the Soviet authority intended to safeguard the lives and health of the wage earners;

(e) To assist the trade unions and works committees in their efforts to ameliorate the labor conditions in individual enterprises as well as in entire branches of industry.

132. The officers of labor inspection are authorized to adopt special measures, in addition to the measures mentioned in the preceding section, for the removal of conditions endangering the lives and health of workers, even if such measures have not been provided for by any particular law or regulation, instructions or order of the People's Commissariat of Labor or of the Local Department of Labor.

Note. Upon taking special measures to safeguard the lives and health of wage earners, as authorized by the present section, the officers of inspection shall immediately report thereof to the Local Department of Labor, which may either approve these measures or reject them.

133. The scope and the forms of activity of the organs of labor inspection shall be determined by instructions and order issued by the People's Commissariat of Labor.

134. The enforcement of the instructions, rules and regulations relating to safety is entrusted to the technical inspectors.

135. The technical inspectors shall be appointed by the Local Departments of Labor from among engineering specialists; these inspectors shall perform within the territory under their jurisdiction the duties prescribed by Section 131 of the present Code.

136. The technical inspectors shall be guided in their activity, besides the general regulations, by the instructions and orders of the People's Commissariat of Labor and by the instructions issued by the technical division of the Local Department of Labor.

137. The activity of the sanitary inspection shall be determined by instructions issued by the People's Commissariat of Health Protection jointly with the People's Commissariat of Labor.

#### APPENDIX TO SECTION 80

##### Rules Concerning Labor Booklets

1. Every citizen of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, upon assignment to a definite group and category (Section 62 of the present Code), shall receive, free of charge, a labor booklet.

Note. The form of the labor booklets shall be worked out by the People's Commissariat of Labor.

2. Each wage earner, on entering the employment of an enterprise, establishment or institution employing paid labor, shall present his labor booklet to the management thereof, and on entering the employment of a private individual—to the latter.

Note. A copy of the labor booklet shall be kept by the management of the enterprise, establishment, institution or by the private individual by whom the wage earner is employed.

3. All work performed by a wage earner during the normal working day as well as piece work or overtime work, and all payments received by him as a wage earner (remuneration in money or in kind, subsidies from the unemployment and hospital funds), must be entered in his labor booklet.

Note. In the labor booklet must also be entered the leaves of absence and sick leave of the wage earner, as well as the fines imposed on him during and on account of his work.

4. Each entry in the labor booklet must be dated and signed by the person making the entry, and also by the wage earner (if the latter is literate), who thereby certifies the correctness of the entry.

5. The labor booklet shall contain:

- (a) The name, surname and date of birth of the wage earner;
- (b) The name and address of the trade union of which the wage earner is a member;
- (c) The group and category to which the wage earner has been assigned by the valuation commission.

6. Upon the discharge of a wage earner, his labor booklet shall under no circumstances be withheld from him. Whenever an old booklet is replaced by a new one, the former shall be left in possession of the wage earner.

7. In case a wage earner loses his labor booklet, he shall be provided with a new one into which shall be copied all the entries of the lost booklet; in such a case a fee determined by the rules of internal management may be charged to the wage earner for the new booklet.

8. A wage earner must present his labor booklet upon the request:

- (a) Of the managers of the enterprise, establishment or institution where he is employed;
- (b) Of the Department of Labor Distribution;
- (c) Of the trade unions;
- (d) Of the officials of workers' control and of labor protection;
- (e) Of the insurance offices or institutions acting as such.

#### APPENDIX TO SECTION 104 Right to Weekly Rest and Holidays

7. No work will be done on the following holidays dedicated to the memory of historical and social events.

- a) January 1—New Year;
- b) January 22—Day of January 9, 1905;
- c) March 12—Fall of the Autocracy;
- d) March 19—Day of the Paris Commune;
- e) May 1—Day of the International;
- f) November 7—Day of the Proletarian Revolution.

*The Code of Labor Laws of Soviet Russia*, pp. 14-46, with minor modifications by the editor. The Appendix to No. 104, on holidays, is from *Sobranie zakononii i rasporiazhenii*, December 10, 1918, No. 87-88, St. 905, p. 1114.



MANIFESTO FROM THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE COUNCIL  
OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS TO THE WORKERS OF AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

November 3, 1918

*The collapse of Germany and Austria-Hungary at the end of World War I stimulated Soviet hopes for revolutions in those areas. Various events of the next three years kept that hope alive. The following is a typical, and perhaps the first, official expression of the hopes for revolution in response to events accompanying or following the collapse of Central Europe.*

We, the workers, peasants, and soldiers of Russia, who are preparing to celebrate the first anniversary of our victory over the landlords, capitalists, generals, and bureaucrats, we send you brotherly greetings, comrade workers, peasants, and soldiers of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, in the days of your victory over the oppressor.

Our hearts beat fast at the news that you have taken into your own hands the cause of peace, that you are bent on destroying the old imperialist bureaucracy together with its chief, Karl Habsburg, that you proclaim the Socialist Republic and the Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. We greet these Councils which tomorrow will take power. We greet you, who have thrown off the yoke of national oppression. We greet the liberation of the peoples of the former Austro-Hungarian State from the oppression of the Austrian Kings, Kaisers, black-yellow bureaucracy. We are firmly convinced that the workers, soldiers, and peasants of Hungary have not freed themselves from the landed bureaucracy and military capitalism in order to let themselves be exploited by the Hungarian landowners, bankers, and capitalists. We firmly believe that the Hungarian workers and peasants will make an end to the Hungarian capitalists, and that the Hungarian Government will be a government of Hungarian workers, soldiers, and peasants.

We are firmly convinced that the brave and honest workers have not thrown off the yoke of the Viennese Emperor in order to be deceived by the Czech bourgeoisie, headed by Kramarz, and that they will not leave the conduct of their policy in the hands of the bankers, headed by Breis. We firmly believe that the German workers and soldiers of Austria have not overturned the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Habsburg in order to submit to the German Emperor Hohenzollern; that they have not risen in order to replace the old authorities by hanging around their necks a Weisskirchner, a Wolf, or other representatives of the Austrian bourgeoisie. We are firmly convinced that the Rumanian peasants who have thrown off the yoke of the Hungarian magnates will not enter the service of the Ruthenian boyars, lawyers, and priests.

We are deeply convinced that when the German, Czech, Croat, Hungarian, Slovene workers, soldiers, and peasants take power into their hands and complete the work of the entire national liberation, they will conclude a brotherly alliance of free peoples and with united forces they will defeat the capitalists. The starving workers of Vienna will receive bread from the peasants of Hungary to whom they will give the products of their labour. The Czech workers will soon see that the landlords and kulaks refuse bread not only to the German but also to the Czech workers; not in an alliance with the national bourgeoisie, but in an alliance of the proletariat of all the nations who live in Austria lies the guarantee of victory.

To make the victory a final one, the workers of all lands must unite for a common struggle against world capital. The workers, peasants, and soldiers of Austria-Hungary will not let their bourgeoisie harness them to the chariot of Anglo-American capital. The Czech, Hungarian, and German bourgeois, who only yesterday cringed before the Habsburgs, the German and Hungarian bourgeois who only yesterday licked the boots of the Hohenzollerns, now shout: 'Long live Wilson!' To assist this swindler's trick American capital promises you bread; we, however, tell you, German, Czech, Hungarian, Croat, Slovene

workers, peasants, and soldiers: American, French, and English capital is just as much as enemy of the working class as German capital. If American, English, French capital emerges victorious from the war, not only will it force you to pay the debts accumulated by your bourgeoisie, but it will also impose upon you enormous indemnities. It is now waging a criminal war against the workers and peasants of Russia, to force them to pay the debts of the Russian bourgeoisie and Tsarism.

This will be the help which American capital will send you instead of the promised bread. It could not give bread to the Italian workers, even when it was forcing them to shed their blood for its interests. You can get help and bread only from the Russian workers, who have taken power into their hands and who, after a year's struggle, have created the Red Army and have driven out the White Guard bands from the rich grain areas, and who will have the bread required by us and by you if, by joint efforts, we prevent the victory of Anglo-American capital. We are firmly convinced that the Austrian and Hungarian proletariat will understand that the factory owners, bankers, generals of any country are not to be trusted, that the liberation of the working masses is possible only by means of the international proletarian revolution. We appeal to you to unite with the Russian workers, soldiers, and peasants.

Our union will be joined by the workers of all lands and with joint efforts we shall consolidate the victory of the working masses over capital, red with the blood of the poor. During a whole year of grim struggle the workers and peasants of Russia have alone defended the power of the proletariat. They were awaiting help from their western-European brothers, and this help is coming. You have entered the path of revolution, go boldly forward along this road to victory.

Long live the freedom of the peoples of Austria; the Hungarians, Czechs, Slovenes, Ruthenians. Long live the Councils of the Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' Deputies of Austria-Hungary.

Long live the alliance between them and the Soviets of Russia for the common struggle.

Degras, *Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy*, Vol. 1, pp. 121-123.



## DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND PROLETARIAN DEMOCRACY.

### LENIN'S *THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION AND THE RENEGADE KAUTSKY*

November 10, 1918

*Lenin's writings often combined both the most immediate political polemics and statements of broad theory; an excellent example is this response to a pamphlet by the prominent German Marxist and Social Democrat, Karl Kautsky. Kautsky's The Dictatorship of the Proletariat had raised serious questions about democracy and freedom of expression in the new Soviet state and about some of Lenin's interpretations of Marxism. Here Lenin is at his most polemical and vituperative, bitterly abusing Kautsky personally. Yet, here Lenin also makes basic theoretical interpretations of the Marxist canon; his insistence that the dictatorship of the proletariat is at the center of Marxism is an essential part of what will come to be called Marxism-Leninism, as is the definition he gives to it. Similarly, he gives the term democracy a fundamental redefinition that will also become part of the Marxist-Leninist political lexicon. Moreover, he introduces a very important theme which he developed more fully shortly afterwards: that*

Bolshevism and the Russian Revolution were to serve as the models for development elsewhere. Thus the essay was also the beginning of a major political struggle for influence over European socialism and the revolutions Lenin was expecting at any moment in Europe. Lenin was anxious that the coming wave of revolutions be "Bolshevik" and not influenced by Kautsky and others he branded as reformist. This helps to explain both the personal bitterness of the attacks—Kautsky's reputation and potential influence on European socialism needed to be destroyed—and why Lenin felt it necessary to devote so much time and space (it runs nearly one hundred pages) to refuting and attacking Kautsky. It apparently was to be even longer, but it was abruptly ended when, Lenin wrote in lieu of a conclusion, "news was received from Germany announcing the beginning of a victorious revolution." The essay was begun in October and finished November 10, 1918, and published immediately as a pamphlet. Because of length portions of the essay have been omitted, as indicated in the text.

V.I. Lenin

*The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*

PREFACE

Kautsky's pamphlet, *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, recently published in Vienna (Wien, 1918, Ignaz Brand, pp. 63) is a most lucid example of that utter and ignominious bankruptcy of the Second International about which all honest socialists in all countries have been talking for a long time. The proletarian revolution is now becoming a practical issue in a number of countries, and an examination of Kautsky's renegade sophistries and his complete renunciation of Marxism is therefore essential.

First of all, it should be emphasized, however, that the present author has, from the very beginning of the war, repeatedly pointed to Kautsky's rupture with Marxism....

In substance, the chief theoretical mistake Kautsky makes in his pamphlet on the dictatorship of the proletariat lies in those opportunist distortions of Marx's ideas on the state—the distortions which I exposed in detail in my pamphlet, *The State and Revolution*.

These preliminary remarks were necessary for they show that I openly accused Kautsky of being a renegade *long before* the Bolsheviks assumed state power and were condemned by him on that account.

HOW KAUTSKY TURNED MARX INTO A COMMON LIBERAL

The fundamental question that Kautsky discusses in his pamphlet is that of the very essence of proletarian revolution, namely, the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is a question that is of the greatest importance for all countries, especially for the advanced ones, especially for those at war, and especially at the present time. One may say without fear of exaggeration that this is the key problem of the entire proletarian class struggle. It is, therefore, necessary to pay particular attention to it.

Kautsky formulates the question as follows: "The contrast between the two socialist trends" (i.e., the Bolsheviks and non-Bolsheviks) "is the contrast between two radically different methods: the *dictatorial* and the *democratic*" (p. 3).

Let us point out, in passing, that when calling the non-Bolsheviks in Russia, i.e., the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, socialists, Kautsky was guided by their *name*, that is, by a word, and not by the *actual place* they occupy in the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. What a wonderful understanding and application of Marxism! But more of this later.

For the moment we must deal with the main point, namely, with Kautsky's great discovery of the "fundamental contrast" between "democratic and dictatorial methods." That is the crux of the matter; that is the essence of Kautsky's pamphlet. And that is such an awful theoretical muddle, such a complete renunciation of Marxism, that Kautsky, it must be confessed, has far excelled Bernstein.

The question of the dictatorship of the proletariat is a question of the relation of the proletarian state to the bourgeois state, of proletarian democracy to bourgeois democracy. One would think that this is as plain as a pike-staff. But Kautsky, like a schoolmaster who has become as dry as dust from quoting the same old textbooks on history, persistently turns his back on the twentieth century and his face to the eighteenth century, and for the hundredth time, in a number of paragraphs, in an incredibly tedious fashion chews the old cud over the relation of bourgeois democracy to absolutism and medievalism!

It sounds just like he were chewing rags in his sleep!

But this means he utterly fails to understand what is what! One cannot help smiling at Kautsky's effort to make it appear that there are people who preach "contempt for democracy" (p. 11) and so forth. That is the sort of twaddle Kautsky uses to befog and confuse the issue, for he talks like the liberals, speaking of democracy in general, and not of *bourgeois* democracy; he even avoids using this precise, class term, and, instead, tries to speak about "pre-socialist" democracy. This windbag devotes almost one-third of his pamphlet, twenty pages out of sixty-three, to this twaddle, which is so agreeable to the bourgeoisie, for it is tantamount to embellishing bourgeois democracy, and obscures the question of the proletarian revolution.

But, after all, the title of Kautsky's pamphlet is *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. Everybody knows that this is the very *essence* of Marx's doctrine; and after a lot of irrelevant twaddle Kautsky *was obliged* to quote Marx's words on the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But the way in which he the "Marxist" did it was simply farcical! Listen to this:

"This view" (which Kautsky dubs "contempt for democracy") "rests upon a single word of Karl Marx's." This is what Kautsky literally says on page 20. And on page 60 the same thing is repeated even in the form that they (the Bolsheviks) "opportunistly recalled the little word" (that is literally what he says—*des Wörtchens!!*) "about the dictatorship of the proletariat which Marx once used in 1875 in a letter."

Here is Marx's "little word":

"Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat."

First of all, to call this classical reasoning of Marx's, which sums up the whole of his revolutionary teaching, "a single word" and even "a little word," is an insult to and complete renunciation of Marxism. It must not be forgotten that Kautsky knows Marx almost by heart, and, judging by all he has written, he has in his desk, or in his head, a number of pigeon-holes in which all that was ever written by Marx is most carefully filed so as to be ready at hand for quotation. Kautsky *must know* that both Marx and Engels, in their letters as well as in their published works, *repeatedly* spoke about the dictatorship of the proletariat, before and especially after the Paris Commune. Kautsky must know that the formula "dictatorship of the proletariat" is merely a more historically concrete and scientifically exact formulation of the proletariat's task of "smashing" the bourgeois state machine, about which both Marx and Engels, in summing up the experience of the Revolution of 1848, and, still more so, of 1871, spoke for *forty years*, between 1852 and 1891.

How is this monstrous distortion of Marxism by the Marxist pendant Kautsky to be explained? As far as the philosophical roots of this phenomenon are concerned, it amounts to the substitution of eclecticism and sophistry for dialectics. Kautsky is the past master at this sort of substitution. Regarded from the point of view of practical politics, it amounts to subservience to the opportunists, that is, in the last analysis to the bourgeoisie. Since the outbreak of the war, Kautsky has made increasingly rapid progress in this art of being a Marxist in words and a lackey of the bourgeoisie in deeds, until he has become a virtuoso at it.

One feels even more convinced of this when examining the remarkable way in which Kautsky "interprets" Marx's "little word" about the dictatorship of the proletariat. Listen to this:

"Marx, unfortunately, neglected to show us in greater detail how he conceived this dictatorship...." (This is an utterly mendacious phrase of a renegade, for Marx and Engels gave us, indeed, quite a number of the most detailed indications, which Kautsky, the Marxist pedant, has deliberately ignored.) Literally, the word dictatorship means the abolition of democracy. But, of course, taken literally, this word also means the undivided rule of a single person unrestricted by any laws—an autocracy, which differs from despotism only in-sofar as it is not meant as a permanent state institution, but as a transient emergency measure.

"The term, 'dictatorship of the proletariat,' hence not the dictatorship of a single individual, but of a class, *ipso facto* precludes the possibility that Marx in this connection had in mind a dictatorship in the literal sense of the term.

"He speaks here not of a *form of government*, but of a *condition*, which must necessarily arise wherever the proletariat has gained political power. That Marx in this case did not have in mind a form of government is proved by the fact that he was of the opinion that in Britain and America the transition might take place peacefully, i.e., in a democratic way" (p. 20).

We have deliberately quoted this argument in full so that the reader may clearly see the methods Kautsky the "theoretician" employs.

Kautsky chose to approach the question in such a way as to begin with the definition of the "word" dictatorship.

Very well. Everyone has a sacred right to approach a question in whatever way he pleases. One must only distinguish a serious and honest approach from a dishonest one. Anyone who wants to be serious in approaching the question in this way ought to give *his own definition* of the "word." Then the question would be put fairly and squarely. But Kautsky does not do that. "Literally," he writes, "the word dictatorship means the abolition of democracy."

In the first place, this is not a definition. If Kautsky wanted to avoid giving a definition of the concept dictatorship, why did he choose this particular approach to the question?

Secondly, it is obviously wrong. It is natural for a liberal to speak of "democracy" in general; but a Marxist will never forget to ask: "for what class?" Everyone knows, for instance (and Kautsky the "historian" knows it too), that rebellions, or even strong ferment, among the slaves in ancient times at once revealed the fact that the ancient state was essentially a *dictatorship of the slaveowners*. Did this dictatorship abolish democracy *among*, and *for*, the slaveowners? Everybody knows that it did not.

Kautsky the "Marxist" made this monstrously absurd and untrue statement because he "*forgot*" the class struggle....

To transform Kautsky's liberal and false assertion into a Marxist and true one, one must say: dictatorship does not necessarily mean the abolition of democracy for the class that exercises the dictatorship over other classes; but it does mean the abolition (or very material restriction, which is also a form of abolition) of democracy for the class over which, or against which, the dictatorship is exercised.

But, however true this assertion may be, it does not give a definition of dictatorship.

Let us examine Kautsky's next sentence:

"...But, of course, taken literally, this word also means the undivided rule of a single person unrestricted by any laws...."

Like a blind puppy sniffing at random first in one direction and then in another, Kautsky accidentally stumbled upon *one* true idea (namely, that dictatorship is rule unrestricted by any laws), *nevertheless*, he *failed* to give a definition of dictatorship, and, moreover, he made an obvious historical blunder, namely, that dictatorship means the rule of a single person. This is even grammatically incorrect, since dictatorship may also be exercised by a handful of persons, or by an oligarchy, or by a class, etc.

Kautsky then goes on to point out the difference between dictatorship and despotism, but, although what he says is obviously incorrect, we shall not dwell upon it, as it is wholly irrelevant to the question that interests us. Everyone knows Kautsky's inclination to turn from the twentieth century to the eighteenth, and from the eighteenth century to classical antiquity, and we hope that the German proletariat, after it has attained its dictatorship, will bear this inclination of his in mind and appoint him, say, teacher of ancient history at some Gymnasium. To try to evade a definition of the dictatorship of the proletariat by philosophising about despotism is either crass stupidity or very clumsy trickery.

As a result, we find that, having undertaken to discuss the dictatorship, Kautsky rattled off a great deal of manifest lies, but has given no definition! Yet, instead of relying on his mental faculties he could have used his memory to extract from "pigeon-holes" all those instances in which Marx speaks of dictatorship. Had he done so, he would certainly have arrived either at the following definition or at one in substance coinciding with it:

Dictatorship is rule based directly upon force and unrestricted by any laws.

The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is rule won and maintained by the use of violence by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, rule that is unrestricted by any laws.

This simple truth, a truth that is as plain as a pikestaff to every class-conscious worker (who represents the people, and not an upper section of petty-bourgeois scoundrels who have been bribed by the capitalist, such as are the social-imperialists of all countries), this truth, which is obvious to every representative of the exploited classes fighting or their emancipation, this truth, which is beyond dispute for every Marxist, has to be "extracted by force" from the most learned Mr. Kautsky! How is it to be explained? Simply by that spirit of servility with which the leaders of the Second International, who have become contemptible sycophants in the service of the bourgeoisie, are imbued.

Kautsky first committed a sleight of hand by proclaiming the obvious nonsense that the word dictatorship, in its literal sense, means the dictatorship of a single person, and then—on the strength of this sleight of hand—he declared that "hence" Marx's words about the dictatorship of a class were *not* meant in the literal sense (but in one in which dictatorship does not imply revolutionary violence, but the "peaceful" winning of a majority under bourgeois—mark you—"democracy").

One must, if you please, distinguish between a "condition" and a "form of government." A wonderfully profound distinction; it is like drawing a distinction between the "condition" of stupidity of a man who reasons foolishly and the "form" of his stupidity.

Kautsky *finds it necessary* to interpret dictatorship as a "condition of domination" (this is the literal expression he uses on the very next page, p. 21), because then *revolutionary violence, and violent revolution, disappear*. The "condition of domination" is a condition in which any majority finds itself under ... "democracy!" Thanks to such a fraud, *revolution happily disappears!*

The fraud, however, is too crude and will not save Kautsky. One cannot hide the fact that dictatorship presupposes and implies a "condition," one so disagreeable to renegades, of *revolutionary violence* of one class against another. It is patently absurd to draw a distinction between a "condition" and a "form of government." To speak of forms of government in this connection is trebly stupid, for every schoolboy knows that monarchy and republic are two different forms of government. It must be explained to Mr. Kautsky that *both* these forms of government, like all transitional "forms of government" under capitalism, are only variations of the *bourgeois state*, that is, of the *dictatorship of the bourgeoisie*.

Lastly, to speak of forms of government is not only a stupid, but also a very crude falsification of Marx, who was very clearly speaking here of this or that form or type of *state*, and not of forms of government.

The proletarian revolution is impossible without the forcible destruction of the bourgeois state machine and the substitution for it of a *new one* which, in the words of Engels, is "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word."

Because of his renegade position, Kautsky, however, has to befog and belie all this. Look what wretched subterfuges he uses.

First subterfuge. "That Marx in this case did not have in mind a form of government is proved by the fact that he was of the opinion that in Britain and America the transition might take place peacefully, i.e., in a democratic way."

The *form of government* has absolutely nothing to do with it, for there are monarchies which are not typical of the bourgeois *state*, such, for instance, as have no military clique, and there are republics which are quite typical in this respect, such, for instance, as have a military clique and a bureaucracy. This is a universally known historical and political fact, and Kautsky cannot falsify it.

If Kautsky had wanted to argue in a serious and honest manner he would have asked himself: Are there historical laws relating to revolution which know of no exception? And the reply would have been: No, there are no such laws. Such laws only apply to the typical, to what Marx once termed the "ideal," meaning average, normal, typical capitalism.

Further, was there in the seventies anything which made England and America exception *in regard to what we are now discussing*? It will be obvious to anyone at all familiar with the requirements of science in regard to the problems of history that this question must be put. To fail to put it is tantamount to falsifying science, to engaging in sophistry. And, the question having been put, there can be no doubt as to the reply: the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is *violence* against the bourgeoisie; and the necessity of such violence is *particularly* called for, as Marx and Engels have repeatedly explained in detail (especially in *The Civil War in France* and in the preface to it), by the existence of *militarism and a bureaucracy*. But it is precisely these institutions that were *non-existent* in Britain and America in the seventies, when Marx made his observations (they *do* exist in Britain and in America *now*)!

Kautsky has to resort to trickery literally at every step to cover up his apostasy!

And note how he inadvertently betrayed his cloven hoof when he wrote: "peacefully, i.e., in a democratic way!"

In defining dictatorship, Kautsky tried his utmost to conceal from the reader the fundamental feature of this concept, namely, revolutionary *violence*. But now the truth is out: it is a question of the contrast between *peaceful* and *violent revolutions*.

That is the crux of the matter. Kautsky has to resort to all these subterfuges, sophistries and falsifications only to *excuse* himself from *violent* revolution, and to conceal his renunciation of it, his desertion to the side of the *liberal* labour policy, i.e., to the side of the bourgeoisie. That is the crux of the matter....

To sum up: Kautsky has in a most unparalleled manner distorted the concept dictatorship of the proletariat, and has turned Marx into a common liberal; that is, he himself has sunk to the level of a liberal who utters banal phrases about "pure democracy," embellishing and glossing over the class content of *bourgeois* democracy, and shrinking, above all, from the use of *revolutionary violence* by the oppressed class. By so "interpreting" the concept "revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat" as to expunge the revolutionary violence of the oppressed class against its oppressors, Kautsky has beaten the world record in the liberal distortion of Marx. The renegade Bernstein has proved to be a mere puppy compared with the renegade Kautsky.

#### BOURGEOIS AND PROLETARIAN DEMOCRACY

The question which Kautsky has so shamelessly muddled really stands as follows.

If we are not to mock at common sense and history, it is obvious that we cannot speak of "pure democracy" as long as different *classes* exist; we can only speak of *class* democracy. (Let us say in parenthesis that "pure democracy" is not only an *ignorant* phrase, revealing a lack of understanding both of the class struggle and of the nature of the state, but also a

thrice-empty phrase, since in communist society democracy will *wither away* in the process of changing and becoming a habit, but will never be "pure" democracy.)

"Pure democracy" is the mendacious phrase of a liberal who wants to fool the workers. History knows of bourgeois democracy which takes the place of feudalism, and of proletarian democracy which takes the place of bourgeois democracy.

When Kautsky devotes dozens of pages to "proving" the truth the bourgeois democracy is progressive compared with medievalism, and that the proletariat must unfailingly utilise it in its struggle against the bourgeoisie, that in fact is just liberal twaddle intended to fool the workers. This is a truism, not only for educated Germany, but also for uneducated Russia. Kautsky is simply throwing "learned" dust in the eyes of the workers when, with a pompous *mein*, he talks about Weitling and the Jesuits of Paraguay and many other things, *in order to avoid* telling about the *bourgeois* essence of modern, i.e., *capitalist*, democracy.

Kautsky takes from Marxism what is acceptable to the liberals, to the bourgeoisie (the criticism of the Middle Ages, and the progressive historical role of capitalism in general and of capitalist democracy in particular), and discards, passes over in silence, glosses over all that in Marxism which is *unacceptable* to the bourgeoisie (the revolutionary violence of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie for the latter's destruction). That is why Kautsky, by virtue of his objective position and irrespective of what his subjective convictions may be, inevitably proves to be a lackey of the bourgeoisie.

Bourgeois democracy, although a great historical advance in comparison with medievalism, always remains, and under capitalism is bound to remain, restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a snare and deception for the exploited, for the poor. It is this truth, which forms a most essential part of Marx's teaching, that Kautsky the "Marxist" has failed to understand. On this—the fundamental issue—Kautsky offers "delights" for the bourgeoisie instead of a scientific criticism of those conditions which make every bourgeois democracy a democracy for the rich.

Let us first remind the most learned Mr. Kautsky of the theoretical propositions of Marx and Engels which that pedant has so disgracefully "forgotten" (to please the bourgeoisie), and then explain the matter as popularly as possible.

Not only the ancient and feudal, but also "the modern representative state is an instrument of exploitation of wage-labour by capital" (Engels, in his work on the state). "As, therefore, the state is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, to hold down one's adversaries by force, it is sheer nonsense to talk of a 'free people's state'; so long as the proletariat still needs the state, it does not need it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist" (Engels, in his letter to Bebel, March 28, 1875). "In reality, however, the state is nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic no less than in the monarchy" (Engels, Introduction to *The Civil War in France* by Marx). Universal suffrage is "the gauge of the maturity of the working class. *It cannot and never will be anything more in the present-day state.*" (Engels, in his work on the state. Mr. Kautsky very tediously chews over the cud in the first part of this proposition, which is acceptable to the bourgeoisie. But the second part, which we have italicised and which is not acceptable to the bourgeoisie, the renegade Kautsky passes over in silence!) "The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary, body, executive and legislative at the same time.... Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to represent and suppress (*ver- und zertreten*) the people in Parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for workers, foremen and accountants for his business" (Marx, in his work on the Paris Commune, *The Civil War in France*).



Every one of these propositions, which are excellently known to the most learned Mr. Kautsky, is a slap in his face and lays bare his apostasy. Nowhere in his pamphlet does Kautsky reveal the slightest understanding of these truths. His whole pamphlet is a sheer mockery of Marxism!

Take the fundamental laws of modern states, take their administration, take freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, or "equality of all citizens before the law," and you will see at every turn evidence of the hypocrisy of bourgeois democracy with which every honest and class-conscious worker is familiar. There is not a single state, however democratic, which has no loopholes or reservations in its constitution guaranteeing the bourgeoisie the possibility of dispatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law, and so forth, in case of a "violation of public order," and actually in case the exploited class "violates" its position of slavery and tries to behave in a non-slavish manner. Kautsky shamelessly embellishes bourgeois democracy and omits to mention, for instance, how the most democratic and republican bourgeoisie in America or Switzerland deal with workers on strike.

The wise and learned Kautsky keeps silent about these things! That learned politician does not realise that to remain silent on this matter is despicable. He prefers to tell the workers nursery tales of the kind that democracy means "protecting the minority." It is incredible, but it is a fact! In the year of our Lord 1918, in the fifth year of the world imperialist slaughter and the strangulation of internationalist minorities (i.e., those who have not despicably betrayed socialism, like the Renaudels and Longuets, the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Hendersons and Webbs et al.) in all "democracies" of the world, the learned Mr. Kautsky sweetly, very sweetly, sings the praises of "protection of the minority." Those who are interested may read this on page 15 of Kautsky's pamphlet. And on page 16 this learned ... individual tells you about the Whigs and Tories in England in the eighteenth century!

What wonderful erudition! What refined servility to the bourgeoisie! What civilised belly-crawling before the capitalists and boot-licking! If I were Krupp or Scheidemann, or Clemenceau or Renaudel, I would pay Mr. Kautsky millions, reward him with Judas kisses, praise him before the workers and urge "socialist unity" with "honourable" men like him. To write pamphlets against the dictatorship of the proletariat, to talk about the Whigs and Tories in England in the eighteenth century, to assert that democracy means "protecting the minority," and remain silent about *pogroms* against internationalists in the "democratic" republic of America—isn't this rendering lackey service to the bourgeoisie?

The learned Mr. Kautsky has "forgotten"—accidentally forgotten, probably—a "trifle," namely, that the ruling party in a bourgeois democracy extends the protection of the minority only to another *bourgeois* party, while the proletariat, on all *serious, profound and fundamental* issues, gets martial law or pogroms, instead of the "protection of the minority." *The more highly developed a democracy is, the more imminent are pogroms or civil war in connection with any profound political divergence which is dangerous to the bourgeoisie.* The learned Mr. Kautsky could have studied this "law" of bourgeois bureaucracy in connection with the Dreyfus case in republican France, with the lynching of Negroes and internationalists in the democratic republic of America, with the case of Ireland and Ulster in democratic Britain, with the baiting of the Bolsheviks and the staging of pogroms against them in April 1917 in the democratic republic of Russia. I have purposely chosen examples not only from wartime but also from pre-war time, peacetime. But mealy-mouthed Mr. Kautsky prefers to shut his eyes to these facts of the twentieth century, and instead to tell the workers wonderfully new, remarkably interesting, unusually edifying and incredibly important things about the Whigs and Tories of the eighteenth century!

Take the bourgeois parliament. Can it be that the learned Kautsky has never heard that the *more highly* democracy is developed, the *more* the bourgeois parliaments are subjected by the stock exchange and the bankers? This does not mean that we must not make use of

bourgeois parliament (the Bolsheviks made better use of it than probably any other party in the world, for in 1912-14 we won the entire workers' curia in the Fourth Duma). But it does mean that only a liberal can forget the *historical limitations and conventional nature* of the bourgeois parliamentary system as Kautsky does. Even in the most democratic bourgeois state the oppressed people at every step encounter the crying contradiction between the *formal* equality proclaimed by the "democracy" of the capitalists and the thousands of *real* limitations and subterfuges which turn the proletarians into *wage-slaves*. It is precisely this contradiction that is opening the eyes of the people to the rottenness, mendacity and hypocrisy of capitalism. It is this contradiction that the agitators and propagandists of socialism are constantly exposing to the people, *in order to prepare* them for revolution! And now that the era of revolution *has begun*, Kautsky turns his back upon it and begins to extol the charms of *moribund* bourgeois democracy.

Proletarian democracy, of which Soviet government is one of the forms, has brought a development and expansion of democracy unprecedented in the world, for the vast majority of the population, for the exploited and working people. To write a whole pamphlet about democracy, as Kautsky did, in which two pages are devoted to dictatorship and dozens to "pure democracy," and *fail to notice* this fact, means completely distorting the subject in liberal fashion.

Take foreign policy. In no bourgeois state, not even in the most democratic, is it conducted openly. The people are deceived everywhere, and in democratic France, Switzerland, America and Britain this is done on an incomparably wider scale and in an incomparably subtler manner than in other countries. The Soviet government has torn the veil of mystery from foreign policy in a revolutionary manner. Kautsky has not noticed this, he keeps silent about it, although in the era of predatory wars and secret treaties for the "division of spheres of influence" (i.e., for the partition of the world among the capitalist bandits) this is of *cardinal* importance, for on it depends the question of peace, the life and death of tens of millions of people.

Take the structure of the state. Kautsky picks at all manner of "trifles," down to the argument that under the Soviet Constitution elections are "indirect," but he misses the point. He fails to see the *class* nature of the state apparatus, of the machinery of state. Under bourgeois democracy the capitalists, by thousands of tricks—which are the more artful and effective the more "pure" democracy is developed—*drive* the people away from administrative work, from freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, etc. The Soviet government is the *first* in the world (or strictly speaking, the second, because the Paris Commune began to do the same thing) to *enlist* the people, specifically the *exploited* people, in the work of administration. The working people are *barred* from participation in bourgeois parliaments (they *never decide* important questions under bourgeois democracy, which are decided by the stock exchange and the banks) by thousands of obstacles, and the workers know and feel, see and realise perfectly well that the bourgeois parliaments are institutions *alien* to them, *instruments for the oppression* of the workers by the bourgeoisie, institutions of a hostile class, of the exploiting minority.

The Soviets are the direct organisation of the working and exploited people themselves, which *helps* them to organise and administer their own state in every possible way. And in this it is the vanguard of the working and exploited people, the urban proletariat, that enjoys the advantage of being best united by the large enterprises; it is easier for it than for all others to elect and exercise control over those elected. The Soviet form of organisation automatically *helps* to unite all the working and exploited people around their vanguard, the proletariat. The old bourgeois apparatus—the bureaucracy, the privileges of wealth, of bourgeois education, of social connections, etc. (These real privileges are the more varied the more highly bourgeois democracy is developed)—all this disappears under the Soviet form of organisation. Freedom of the press ceases to be hypocrisy, because the printing-plants and

stocks of paper are taken away from the bourgeoisie. The same thing applies to the best buildings, the palaces, the mansions and manor-houses. Soviet power took thousands upon thousands of these best buildings from the exploiters at one stroke, and in this way made the right of assembly—without which democracy is a fraud—a *million times* more democratic for the people. Indirect elections to non-local Soviets make it easier to hold congresses of Soviets, they make the *entire* apparatus less costly, more flexible, more accessible to the workers and peasants at a time when life is seething and it is necessary to be able very quickly to recall one's local deputy or to delegate him to a general congress of Soviets.

Proletarian democracy is a *million times* more democratic than any bourgeois democracy; Soviet power is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.

To fail to see this one must either deliberately serve the bourgeoisie, or be politically as dead as a doornail, unable to see real life from behind the dusty pages of bourgeois books, be thoroughly imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices, and thereby objectively convert oneself into a lackey of the bourgeoisie.

To fail to see this one must be incapable of *presenting the question* from the point of view of the *oppressed* classes:

Is there a single country in the world, even among the most democratic bourgeois countries, in which the *average rank-and-file* worker, the average rank-and-file *farm labourer*, or village semi-proletarian generally (i.e., the representative of the oppressed, of the overwhelming majority of the population), enjoys anything approaching such *liberty* of holding meetings in the best buildings, such *liberty* of using the largest printing-plants and biggest stocks of paper to express his ideas and to defend his interests, such *liberty* of promoting men and women of his own class to administer and to "knock into shape" the state, as in Soviet Russia?

It is ridiculous to think that Mr. Kautsky could find in any country even one out of a thousand well-informed workers or farm labourers who would have any doubts as to the reply. Instinctively, from hearing fragments of admissions of the truth in the bourgeois press, the workers of the whole world sympathise with the Soviet Republic precisely because they regard it as a *proletarian* democracy, a *democracy for the poor*, and not a democracy for the rich that every bourgeois democracy, even the best, actually is.

We are governed (and our state is "knocked into shape") by bourgeois bureaucrats, by bourgeois members of parliament, by bourgeois judges—such is the simple, obvious and indisputable truth which tens and hundreds of millions of people belonging to the oppressed classes in all bourgeois countries, including the most democratic, know from their own experience, feel and realise every day.

In Russia, however, the bureaucratic machine has been completely smashed, razed to the ground; the old judges have all been sent packing, the bourgeois parliament has been dispersed—and *far more accessible* representation has been given to the workers and peasants; *their* Soviets have replaced the bureaucrats, or *their* Soviets have been put in control of the bureaucrats, or *their* Soviets have been authorised to elect the judges. This fact alone is enough for all the oppressed classes to recognise that Soviet power, i.e., the present form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.

Kautsky does not understand this truth, which is so clear and obvious to every worker, because he has "forgotten," "unlearned" to put the question: *democracy for which class?* He argues from the point of view of "pure" (i.e., non-class? or above-class?) democracy. He argues like Shylock: my "pound of flesh" and nothing else. Equality for all citizens—otherwise there is no democracy...

We shall now examine the experience of the Russian revolution and that divergence between the Soviets of Deputies and the Constituent Assembly which led to the dissolution of the latter and to the withdrawal of the franchise from the bourgeoisie.

## THE SOVIETS DARE NOT BECOME STATE ORGANISATIONS

The Soviets are the Russian form of the proletarian dictatorship. If a Marxist theoretician, writing a work on the dictatorship of the proletariat, had really studied the subject (and not merely repeated the petty-bourgeois lamentations against dictatorship, as Kautsky did, singing to Menshevik tunes), he would first have given a general definition of dictatorship, and would then have examined its peculiar, national, form, the Soviets; he would have given his critique of them as one of the forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It goes without saying that nothing serious could be expected from Kautsky after his liberalistic "interpretation" of Marx's teaching on dictatorship; but the manner in which he approached the question of what the Soviets are and the way he dealt with this question is highly characteristic.

The Soviets, he says, recalling their rise in 1905, created "the most all-embracing (*umfassendste*) form of proletarian organisation, for it embraced all the wage-workers" (p. 31). In 1905 they were only local bodies; in 1917 they became a national organisation.

"The Soviet form of organisation," Kautsky continues, "already has a great and glorious history behind it, and it has a still mightier future before it, and not in Russia alone. It appears that everywhere the old methods of the economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate" (*versagen*; this German expression is somewhat stronger than "inadequate" and somewhat weaker than "impotent") "against the gigantic economic and political forces which finance capital has at its disposal. These old methods cannot be discarded; they are still indispensable for normal times; but from time to time tasks arise which they cannot cope with, tasks that can be accomplished successfully only as a result of a combination of all the political and economic instruments of force of the working class" (p. 32).

Then follows a reasoning on the mass strike and on "trade union bureaucracy"—which is no less necessary than the trade unions—being "useless for the purpose of directing the mighty mass battles that are more and more becoming a sign of the times...."

"Thus," Kautsky concludes, "the Soviet form of organisation is one of the most important phenomena of our time. It promises to acquire decisive importance in the great decisive battles between capital and labour towards which we are marching.

"But are we entitled to demand more of the Soviets? The Bolsheviks, after the November Revolution" (new style, or October, according to our style) "1917, secured in conjunction with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries a majority in the Russian Soviets of Workers' Deputies, and after the dispersion of the Constituent Assembly, they set out to transform the Soviets from a *combat organisation* of one *class*, as they had been up to them, into a *state organisation*. They destroyed the democracy which the Russian people had won in the March" (new style, or February, our style) "Revolution. In line with this, the Bolsheviks have ceased to call themselves *Social-Democrats*. They call themselves *Communists*" (p. 33, Kautsky's italics).

Those who are familiar with Russian Menshevik literature will at once see how slavishly Kautsky copies Martov, Axelrod, Stein and Co. Yes, "slavishly," because Kautsky ridiculously distorts the facts in order to pander to Menshevik prejudices. Kautsky did not take the trouble, for instance, to ask his informants (Stein of Berlin, or Axelrod of Stockholm) *when* the questions of changing the name of the Bolsheviks to Communists and of the significance of the Soviets as state organisations were first raised. Had Kautsky made this simple inquiry he would not have penned these ludicrous lines, for both these questions were raised by the Bolsheviks *in April 1917*, for example, in my "Theses" of April 4, 1917, i.e., *long before* the Revolution of October 1917 (and, of course, long before the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly on January 5, 1918).

But Kautsky's argument which I have just quoted in full represents the *crux* of the whole question of the Soviets. The *crux* is: should the Soviets aspire to become state organisations (in April 1917 the Bolsheviks put forward the slogan: "All Power to the Soviets!" and at the Bolshevik Party Conference held in the same month they declared they were not satisfied

with a bourgeois parliamentary republic but demanded a workers' and peasants' republic of the Paris Commune or Soviet type); or should the Soviets not strive for this, refrain from taking power into their hands, refrain from becoming state organisations and remain the "combat organisations" of one "class" (as Martov expressed it, embellishing by this innocent wish the fact that under Menshevik leadership the Soviets were *an instrument for the subjection of the workers to the bourgeoisie*)?

Kautsky slavishly repeats Martov's words, picks out *fragments* of the theoretical controversy between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, and uncritically and senselessly transplants them to the general theoretical and general European field. The result is such a hodge-podge as to provoke Homeric laughter in every class-conscious Russian worker had he read these arguments of Kautsky's.

When we explain what the question at issue is, every worker in Europe (barring a handful of inveterate socialist-imperialists) will greet Kautsky with similar laughter.

Kautsky has rendered Martov a backhanded service by developing his mistake into a glaring absurdity. Indeed, look what Kautsky's argument amounts to.

The Soviets embrace all wage-workers. The old methods of economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate against finance capital. The Soviets have a great role to play in the future, and not only in Russia. They will play a decisive role in great decisive battles between capital and labour in Europe. That is what Kautsky says.

Excellent. But won't the "decisive battles between capital and labour" decide which of the two classes will assume state power?

Nothing of the kind! Heaven forbid!

The Soviets, which embrace all the wage-workers, *must not become state organisations* in the "decisive" battles!

But what is the state?

The state is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another.

Thus, the oppressed class, the vanguard of all the working and exploited people in modern society, must strive towards the "decisive battles between capital and labour," *but must not touch* the machine by means of which capital suppresses labour!—*It must not break up* that machine!—*It must not make use* of its all-embracing organisation *for suppressing the exploiters!*

Excellent, Mr. Kautsky, magnificent! "We" recognise the class struggle—in the same way as all liberals recognise it, i.e., without the overthrow of the bourgeoisie....

This is where Kautsky's complete rupture both with Marxism and with socialism becomes obvious. Actually, it is desertion to the camp of the bourgeoisie, who are prepared to concede everything except the transformation of the organisations of the class which they oppress into state organisations. Kautsky can no longer save his position of trying to reconcile everything and of getting away from all profound contradictions with mere phrases.

Kautsky either rejects the assumption of state power by the working class altogether, or he concedes that the working class may take over the old, bourgeois state machine. But he will by no means concede that it must break it up, smash it, and replace it by a new, proletarian machine. Whichever way Kautsky's arguments are "interpreted," or "explained," his rupture with Marxism and his desertion to the bourgeoisie are obvious.

Back in the *Communist Manifesto*, describing what sort of state the victorious working class needs, Marx wrote: "the state, i.e., the proletariat organised as the ruling class." Now we have a man who claims still to be a Marxist coming forward and declaring that the proletariat, fully organised and waging the "decisive battle" against capital, *must not* transform its class organisation into a state organisation. Here Kautsky has betrayed that "superstitious belief in the state" which in Germany, as Engels wrote in 1891, "has been carried over into the general thinking of the bourgeoisie and even of many workers." Workers, fight!—our philistine "agrees" to this (as every bourgeois "agrees," since the workers are

fighting all the same, and the only thing to do is to devise means of blunting the edge of their sword)—fight, but *don't dare win!* Don't destroy the state machine of the bourgeoisie, don't replace the bourgeois "state organisation" by the proletarian "state organisation!"

Whoever sincerely shared the Marxist view that the state is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another, and who has at all reflected upon this truth, could never have reached the absurd conclusion that the proletarian organisations capable of defeating finance capital must not transform themselves into state organisations. It was this point that betrayed the petty bourgeois who believe that "after all is said and done" the state is something outside classes or above classes. Indeed, why should the proletariat, "*one class*," be permitted to wage unremitting war on *capital*, which rules not only over the proletariat, but over the whole people, over the whole petty bourgeoisie, over all the peasants, yet this proletariat, this "*one class*" is not to be permitted to transform its organisation into a state organisation? Because the petty bourgeois is *afraid* of the class struggle, and does not carry it to its logical conclusion, *to its main object*....

Kautsky has got himself completely mixed up and has given himself away entirely. Mark you, he himself admits that Europe is heading for decisive battles between capital and labour, and that the old methods of economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate. But these old methods were precisely the utilisation of *bourgeois* democracy. It therefore follow...?

But Kautsky is afraid to think of what follows.

...It therefore follows that only a reactionary, an enemy of the working class, a henchman of the bourgeoisie, can now turn his face to the obsolete past, paint the charms of bourgeois democracy and babble about pure democracy. Bourgeois democracy *was* progressive compared with medievalism, and it had to be utilised. But now it is *not sufficient* for the working class. Now we must look forward instead of backward—to replacing the bourgeois democracy by *proletarian* democracy. And while the preparatory work for the proletarian revolution, the formation and training of the proletarian army were possible (and necessary) *within the framework* of the bourgeois-democratic state, now that we have reached the stage of "decisive battles," to confine the proletariat to this framework means betraying the cause of the proletariat, means being a renegade.

Kautsky has made himself particularly ridiculous by repeating Martov's argument *without noticing* that in Martov's case this argument was based on *another* argument which he, Kautsky, does not use! Martov said (and Kautsky repeats after him) that Russia is not yet ripe for socialism; from which it logically follows that it is too early to transform the Soviets from organs of struggle into state organisations (read: it is timely to transform the Soviets, with the assistance of the Menshevik leaders, into instruments for *subjecting* the workers to the imperialist bourgeoisie). Kautsky, however, *cannot* say outright that Europe is not ripe for socialism. In 1909, when he was not yet a renegade, he wrote that there was then no reason to fear a *premature* revolution, that whoever had renounced revolution for fear of defeat would have been a traitor. Kautsky does not dare renounce this *outright*. And so we get an absurdity, which completely reveals the stupidity and cowardice of the petty bourgeois on the one hand, Europe is ripe for socialism and is heading towards decisive battles between capital and labour; but, on the other hand, the *combat organisation* (i.e., the organisation which arises, grows and gains strength in combat), the organisation of the proletariat, the vanguard and organiser, the leader of the oppressed, *must not* be transformed into a state organisation!

From the point of view of practical politics the idea that the Soviets are necessary as combat organisations but must not be transformed into state organisations is infinitely more absurd than from the point of view of theory. Even in peacetime, when there is no revolutionary situation, the mass struggle of the workers against the capitalists—for instance, the mass strike—gives rise to great bitterness on both sides, to fierce passions in the struggle,

the bourgeoisie constantly insisting that they remain and mean to remain “masters in their own house,” etc. And in time of revolution, when political life reaches boiling point, an organisation like the Soviets, which embraces *all* the workers in *all* branches of industry, *all* the soldiers, and all the working and poorest sections of the rural population—such an organisation, of its own accord, with the development of the struggle, by the simple “logic” of attack and defence, comes inevitably to pose the question *point-blank*. The attempt to take up a middle position and to “reconcile” the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is sheer stupidity and doomed to miserable failure. That is what happened in Russia to the preachings of Martov and other Mensheviks, and that will inevitably happen in Germany and other countries if the Soviets succeed in developing on any wide scale, manage to unite and strengthen. To say to the Soviets: fight, but don’t take all state power into your hands, don’t become state organisations—is tantamount to preaching class collaboration and “social peace” between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. It is ridiculous even to think that such a position in the midst of fierce struggle could lead to anything but ignominious failure. But it is Kautsky’s everlasting fate to sit between two stools. He pretends to disagree with the opportunists on everything in theory, but *in practice* he agrees with them on everything essential (i.e., on everything pertaining to revolution).

#### THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND THE SOVIET REPUBLIC

The question of the Constituent Assembly and its dispersal by the Bolsheviks is the crux of Kautsky’s entire pamphlet. He constantly refers to it, and the whole of this literary production of the ideological leader of the Second International is replete with innuendoes to the effect that the Bolsheviks have “destroyed democracy” (see one of the quotations from Kautsky above). The question is really an interesting and important one, because the relation between bourgeois democracy and proletarian democracy here confronted the revolution in a *practical* form. Let us see how our “Marxist theoretician” has dealt with the question....

If Kautsky has completely renounced Marxism as a theoretician he might at least have examined the question of the struggle of the Soviets with the Constituent Assembly as a historian. We know from many of Kautsky’s works that he *knew how* to be a Marxist historian, and that *such* works of his will remain a permanent possession of the proletariat in spite of his subsequent apostasy. But on this question Kautsky, even as a historian, *turns his back* on the truth, ignores *well-known* facts and behaves like a sycophant. He *wants* to represent the Bolsheviks as being unprincipled and he tells his readers that they tried to *mitigate* the conflict with the Constituent Assembly before dispersing it. There is absolutely nothing wrong about it, we have nothing to recant; I give the theses in full and there it is said as clear as clear can be: Gentlemen of the vacillating petty bourgeoisie entrenched in the Constituent Assembly, either reconcile yourselves to the proletarian dictatorship, or else we shall defeat you by “revolutionary means” (theses 18 and 19).

That is how a really revolutionary proletariat has always behaved and always will behave towards the vacillating petty bourgeoisie.

Kautsky adopts a formal standpoint on the question of the Constituent Assembly. My theses say clearly and repeatedly that the interests of the revolution are higher than the formal rights of the Constituent Assembly (see theses 16 and 17). The formal democratic point of view is precisely the point of view of the *bourgeois* democrat who refuses to admit that the interests of the proletariat and of the proletarian class struggle are supreme. As a historian, Kautsky would not have been able to deny that bourgeois parliaments are the organs of this or that class. But now (for the sordid purpose of renouncing revolution) Kautsky finds it necessary to forget his Marxism, and he *refrains from putting the question*: the organ of what *class* was the Constituent Assembly of Russia? Kautsky does not examine the concrete conditions; he does not want to face facts; he does not say a single word to his German readers about the fact that the theses contained not only a theoretical elucidation of the question of

the limited character of bourgeois democracy (theses 1-3), not only a description of the concrete conditions which determined the discrepancy between the party lists of candidates in the middle of October 1917 and the real state of affairs in December 1917 (theses 4-6), but also a *history of the class struggle and the Civil War* in October-December 1917 (theses 7-15). From this concrete history we drew the conclusion (thesis 14) that the slogan "All Power to the Constituent Assembly!" had, *in reality*, become the slogan of the Cadets and the Kaledin men and their abettors.

Kautsky the historian fails to see this. Kautsky the historian has never heard that universal suffrage sometimes produces petty-bourgeois, sometimes reactionary and counter-revolutionary parliaments. Kautsky the Marxist historian has never heard that the form of elections, the form of democracy, is one thing, and the class content of the given institution is another. This question of the class content of the Constituent Assembly is directly put and answered in my theses.... [The Soviet Constitution]

Let the contemptible renegade scoundrels, amidst the applause of the bourgeoisie and the social-chauvinists,\* abuse our Soviet Constitution for disenfranchising the exploiters! That's fine because it will accelerate and widen the split between the revolutionary workers of Europe and the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Renaudels and Longuets, the Hendersons and Ramsay MacDonalds, the old leaders and old betrayers of socialism.

The mass of the oppressed classes, the class-conscious and honest revolutionary proletarian leaders will be *on our side*. It will be enough to acquaint such proletarians and such people with our Soviet Constitution for them to say at once: "These are really *our people*, this is a real workers' party, this is a real workers' government, for it does not deceive the workers by talking about reforms in the way *all the above-mentioned leaders have done*, but is fighting the exploiters in real earnest, making a revolution in real earnest and *actually* fighting for the complete emancipation of the workers."

The *fact* that after a year's "experience" the Soviets have deprived the exploiters of the franchise *shows* that the Soviets are really organisations of the oppressed and not of socialist-imperialists and social-pacifists who have sold themselves to the bourgeoisie. The *fact* that the Soviets have disenfranchised the exploiters *shows* that they are not organs of petty-bourgeois compromise with the capitalists, not organs of parliamentary chatter (on the part of the Kautskys, the Longuets and the MacDonalds), but organs of the genuine revolutionary proletariat which is waging a life-and-death struggle against the exploiters....

#### [WHAT IS INTERNATIONALISM]

The socialist, the revolutionary proletarian, the internationalist, argues differently. He says: "The character of the war (whether it is reactionary or revolutionary) does not depend on who the attacker was, or in whose country the 'enemy' is stationed; it depends on *what class* is waging the war, and on what politics this war is a continuation of. If the war is a reactionary, imperialist war, that is, if it is being waged by two world groups of the imperialist, rapacious, predatory, reactionary bourgeoisie, then every bourgeoisie (even of the smallest country) becomes a participant in the plunder, and my duty as a representative of the revolutionary proletariat is to prepare for the *world proletarian revolution* as the *only* escape from the horrors of a world slaughter. I must argue, not from the point of view of 'my' country (for that is the argument of a wretched, stupid, petty-bourgeois nationalist who does not realise

\* I have just read a leading article in Frankfurter Zeitung (No. 293, October 22, 1918), giving an enthusiastic summary of Kautsky's pamphlet. This organ of the stock exchange is satisfied. And no wonder! And a comrade writes to me from Berlin that *Vorwärts*, the organ of the Scheidemanns, has declared in a special article that it subscribes to almost every line Kautsky has written. Hearty congratulations!



that he is only a plaything in the hands of the imperialist bourgeoisie), but from the point of view of *my share* in the preparation, in the propaganda, and in the acceleration of the world proletarian revolution."

That is what internationalism means, and that is the duty of the internationalist, the revolutionary worker, the genuine socialist. That is the *ABC* that Kautsky the renegade has "forgotten." And his apostasy becomes still more obvious when he passes from approving the tactics of the petty-bourgeois nationalists (the Mensheviks in Russia, the Longuet supporters in France, the Turatis in Italy, and Haase and Co. in Germany) to criticising the Bolshevik tactics. Here is his criticism:

"The Bolshevik revolution was based on the assumption that it would become the starting-point of a general European revolution, that the bold initiative of Russia would prompt the proletarians of all Europe to rise.

"On this assumption it was, of course, immaterial what forms the Russian separate peace would take, what hardships and territorial losses (literally: mutilation or maiming, *Verstümmelungen*) it would cause the Russian people, and what interpretation of the self-determination of nations it would give. At that time it was also immaterial whether Russia was able to defend herself or not. According to this view, the European revolution would be the best protection of the Russian revolution, and would bring complete and genuine self-determination to all peoples inhabiting the former Russian territory.

"A revolution in Europe, which would establish and consolidate socialism there, would also become the means of removing the obstacles that would arise in Russia in the way of the introduction of the socialist system of production owing to the economic backwardness of the country.

"All this was very logical and very sound—only if the main assumption were granted, namely, that the Russian revolution would infallibly let loose a European revolution. But what if that did not happen?

"So far the assumption has not been justified. And the proletarians of Europe are now being accused of having abandoned and betrayed the Russian revolution. This is an accusation levelled against unknown persons, for who is to be held responsible for the behaviour of the European proletariat?" (p. 28.)

And Kautsky then goes on to explain at great length that Marx, Engels and Bebel were more than once mistaken about the advent of revolution they had anticipated, but that they never based their tactics on the expectation of a revolution "*at a definite date*" (p. 29), whereas, he says, the Bolsheviks "staked everything on one card, on a general European revolution."

We have deliberately quoted this long passage to demonstrate to our readers Kautsky's "skill" in counterfeiting Marxism by palming off his banal and reactionary philistine view in its stead.

First, to ascribe to an opponent an obviously stupid idea and then to refute it is a trick practised by none too clever people. If the Bolsheviks had based their tactics on the expectation of a revolution in other countries *by a definite date* that would have been an undeniable stupidity. But the Bolshevik Party has never been guilty of such stupidity. In my letter to American workers (August 20, 1918), I expressly disown this foolish idea by saying that we count on an American revolution, but not by any definite date. I dwelt at length upon the very same idea more than once in my controversy with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the "Left Communists" (January-March 1918). Kautsky has committed a slight...just a very slight forgery, on which he in fact based his criticism of Bolshevism. Kautsky has confused tactics based on the expectation of a European revolution in the more or less near future, but not at a definite date, with tactics based on the expectation of a European revolution at a definite date. A slight, just very slight forgery!

The last-named tactics are foolish. The first-named *are obligatory* for a Marxist, for every revolutionary proletarian and internationalist—*obligatory*, because they alone take into account in a proper Marxist way the objective situation brought about by the war in all European countries, and they alone conform to the international tasks of the proletariat.

By substituting the petty question about an error which the Bolshevik revolutionaries might have made, but did not, for the important question of the foundations of revolutionary tactics in general, Kautsky adroitly abjures all revolutionary tactics!

A renegade in politics, he is *unable even to present the question* of the objective prerequisites of revolutionary tactics theoretically.

And this brings us to the second point.

Secondly, it is obligatory for a Marxist to count on a European revolution if a *revolutionary situation* exists. It is the ABC of Marxism that the tactics of the socialist proletariat cannot be the same both when there is a revolutionary situation and when there is no revolutionary situation.

If Kautsky had put this question, which is obligatory for a Marxist, he would have seen that the answer was absolutely against him. Long before the war, all Marxists, all socialists were agreed that a European war would create a revolutionary situation. Kautsky himself, before he became a renegade, clearly and definitely recognised this—in 1902 (in his *Social Revolution*) and in 1909 (in his *Road to Power*). It was also admitted in the name of the entire Second International in the Basle Manifesto. No wonder the social-chauvinists and Kautsky supporters (the “Centrists,” i.e., those who waver between the revolutionaries and the opportunists) of all countries shun like the plague the declarations of the Basle Manifesto on this score!

So, the expectation of a revolutionary situation in Europe was not an infatuation of the Bolsheviks, but the *general opinion* of all Marxists. When Kautsky tries to escape from this indisputable truth using such phrases as the Bolsheviks “always believed in the omnipotence of violence and will,” he simply utters a sonorous and empty phrase to *cover up* his evasion, a shameful evasion, to put the question of a revolutionary situation.

To proceed. Has a revolutionary situation actually come or not? Kautsky proved unable to put this question either. The economic facts provide an answer: the famine and ruin created everywhere by the war imply a revolutionary situation. The political facts also provide an answer: ever since 1915 a splitting process has been evident in *all* countries within the old and decayed socialist parties, a process of *departure of the mass* of the proletariat from the socialist-chauvinist leaders to the left, to revolutionary ideas and sentiments, to revolutionary leaders.

Only a person who dreads revolution and betrays it could have failed to see these facts on August 5, 1918, when Kautsky was writing his pamphlet. And now, at the end of October 1918, the revolution is growing *in a number* of European countries, and growing under everybody’s eyes and very rapidly at that. Kautsky the “revolutionary,” who still wants to be regarded as a Marxist, has provided to be a short-sighted philistine, who, like those philistines of 1847 whom Marx ridiculed, failed to see the approaching revolution!

Now to the third point.

Thirdly, what should be the specific features of revolutionary tactics when there is a revolutionary situation in Europe? Having become a renegade, Kautsky feared to put this question, which is obligatory for a Marxist. Kautsky argues like a typical petty bourgeois, a philistine, or like an ignorant peasant: has a “general European revolution” begun or not? If it has, then *he too* is prepared to become a revolutionary! But then, mark you, every scoundrel (like the scoundrels who now sometimes attach themselves to the victorious Bolsheviks) would proclaim himself a revolutionary!

If it has not, then Kautsky will turn his back on revolution! Kautsky does not display a shade of understanding of the truth that a revolutionary Marxist differs from the philistine

and petty bourgeois by his ability to *preach* to the uneducated masses that the maturing revolution is necessary, to *prove* that it is inevitable, to *explain* its benefits to the people, and to *prepare* the proletariat and all the working and exploited people for it.

Kautsky ascribed to the Bolsheviks an absurdity, namely, that they had staked everything on one card, on a European revolution breaking out at a definite date. This absurdity has turned against Kautsky himself, because the logical conclusion of his argument is that the tactics of the Bolsheviks would have been correct if a European revolution had broken out by August 5, 1918! That is the date Kautsky mentions as the time he was writing his pamphlet. And when, a few weeks after this August 5, it became clear that revolution was coming in a number of European countries, the whole apostasy of Kautsky, his whole falsification of Marxism, and his utter inability to reason or even to present questions in a revolutionary manner, became revealed in all their charm!

When the proletarians of Europe are accused of treachery, Kautsky writes, it is an accusation levelled at unknown persons.

You are mistaken, Mr. Kautsky! Look in the mirror and you will see those "unknown persons" against whom this accusation is levelled. Kautsky assumes an air of naïveté and pretends not to understand *who* levelled the accusation, and its *meaning*. In reality, however, Kautsky knows perfectly well that the accusation has been and is being levelled by the German "Lefts," by the Spartacists, by Liebknecht and his friends. This accusation expresses a *clear appreciation* of the fact that the German proletariat betrayed the Russian (and world) revolution when it strangled Finland, the Ukraine, Latvia and Estonia. This accusation is levelled primarily and above all, not against the *masses*, who are always downtrodden, but against those *leaders* who, like the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, *failed* in their duty to carry on revolutionary agitation, revolutionary propaganda, revolutionary work among the masses to overcome their inertness, who in fact worked *against* the revolutionary instincts and aspirations which are always aglow deep down among the mass of the oppressed class. The Scheidemanns bluntly, crudely, cynically, and in most cases for selfish motives betrayed the proletariat and deserted to the side of the bourgeoisie. The Kautsky and the Longuet supporters did the same thing, only hesitatingly and haltingly, and casting cowardly side-glances at those who were stronger at the moment. In all his writings during the war Kautsky tried to *extinguish* the revolutionary spirit instead of fostering and fanning it.

The fact that Kautsky does not even understand the enormous *theoretical* importance, and the even greater agitational and propaganda importance, of the "accusation" that the proletarians of Europe have betrayed the Russian revolution will remain a veritable historical monument to the philistine stupefaction of the "average" leader of German official Social-Democracy! Kautsky does not understand that, owing to the censorship prevailing in the German "Reich," this "accusation" is perhaps the only form in which the German socialists who have not betrayed socialism—Liebknecht and his friends—can express *their appeal to the German workers* to throw off the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, to push aside such "leaders," to free themselves from their stultifying and debasing propaganda, to rise in revolt *in spite of* them, *without* them, and march over their heads *towards revolution*!

Kautsky does not understand this. And how could he understand the tactics of the Bolsheviks? Can a man who renounces revolution in general be expected to weigh and appraise the conditions of the development of revolution in one of the most "difficult" cases?

The Bolsheviks' tactics were correct; they were the *only* internationalist tactics, because they were based, not on the cowardly fear of a world revolution, not on a philistine "lack of faith" in it, not on the narrow nationalist desire to protect one's "own" fatherland (the fatherland of one's own bourgeoisie), while not "giving a damn" about all the rest, but on a correct (and, before the war and before the apostasy of the social-chauvinists and social-pacifists, a universally accepted) *estimation* of the revolutionary situation in Europe. These tactics were the only internationalist tactics, because they did the utmost possible in one

country for the development, support and awakening of the revolution *in all countries*. These tactics have been justified by their enormous success, the Bolshevism (not by any means because of the merits of the Russia Bolsheviks, but because of the most profound sympathy of the *people* everywhere for tactics that are revolutionary in practice) has become *world* Bolshevism, has produced an idea, a theory, a programme and tactics which differ concretely and in practice from those of social-chauvinism and social-pacifism. Bolshevism has *given a coup de grace* to the old, decayed International of the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, Renaudels and Longuets, Hendersons and MacDonalds, who from now on will be treading on each other's feet, dreaming about "unity" and trying to revive a corpse. Bolshevism has *created* the ideological and tactical foundations of a Third International, of a really proletarian and Communist International, which will take into consideration both the gains of the tranquil epoch and the experience of the *epoch of revolutions, which has begun*.

Bolshevism has popularised throughout the world the idea of the "dictatorship of the proletariat," has translated these words from the Latin, first into Russian, and then into *all* the languages of the world, and has shown by the example of *Soviet government* that the workers and poor peasants, *even* of a backward country, even with the least experience, education and habits of organisation, *have been able* for a whole year, amidst gigantic difficulties and amidst a struggle against the exploiters (who were supported by the bourgeoisie of the *whole* world), to maintain the power of the working people, to create a democracy that is immeasurably higher and broader than all previous democracies in the world, and to *start* the creative work of tens of millions of workers and peasants for the practical construction of socialism.

Bolshevism has actually helped to develop the proletarian revolution in Europe and America more powerfully than any party in any other country has so far succeeded in doing. While the workers of the whole world are realising more and more clearly every day that the tactics of the Scheidemanns and Kautskys have not delivered them from the imperialist war and from wage-slavery to the imperialist bourgeoisie, and that these tactics cannot serve as a model for all countries, the mass of workers in all countries are realising more and more clearly every day that Bolshevism has indicated the right road of escape from the horrors of war and imperialism, that Bolshevism *can serve as a model of tactics for all*.

Not only the general European, but the world proletarian revolution is maturing before the eyes of all, and it has been assisted, accelerated and supported by the victory of the proletariat in Russia. And this is not enough for the complete victory of socialism, you say? Of course it is not enough. One country alone cannot do more. But this one country, thanks to Soviet government, has done so much that even if Soviet government in Russia were to be crushed by world imperialism tomorrow, as a result, let us say, of an agreement between German and Anglo-French imperialism—even granted that very worst possibility—it would still be found that Bolshevik tactics have brought enormous benefit to socialism and have assisted the growth of the invincible world revolution....

[Here follows a lengthy discussion of economic principles]

The above lines were written on November 9, 1918. That same night news was received from Germany announcing the beginning of a victorious revolution, first in Kiel and other northern towns and ports, where power has passed into the hands of Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, then in Berlin, where, too, power has passed into the hands of a Council.

The conclusion which still remained to be written to my pamphlet on Kautsky and on the proletarian revolution is now superfluous.

November 10, 1918

Lenin, Vol. 28, pp. 227-325.

## WOMEN AND THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNIST STATE

November 16-21, 1918

*Visions of a new society, speculations about the changing nature and role of the family during industrialization, and concerns about the welfare of women and children merged to produce literature visualizing the family and social relationships under socialism. It also animated some of the social legislation of this era. A handful of women Bolshevik leaders struggled to define the role of women in the revolution and to address their special needs and concerns while avoiding charges of feminist separatism. Toward this end a conference of women workers was held in Moscow, November 16-23. Among the organizers was Alexandra Kollontai. Kollontai, one of the most prominent women Bolsheviks, combined theoretical writing on the family and love with practical work to improve the condition of women and children. In this essay, first given as a speech at the conference and then widely reprinted, she argues that the old family was disintegrating because its economic function was changing. She envisions a new family structure based on new—industrial—economic relationships where the woman as well as the man is a wage earner. In particular she discusses how both the housekeeping and child-rearing roles would be transformed, and the role of the state therein. She also adds, almost as a postscript, her ideas about the new marital relations between the sexes based on mutual respect, equality, and love.*

Alexandra Kolontai

## THE FAMILY AND THE COMMUNIST STATE

## 1. The Family and Wage Labor by Women

Will the family continue to exist in a communist state? Will it be the same as it is now? This question troubles the heart of many working class women, and worries men also. Working women have had to think about these questions frequently since life began changing before our very eyes. Old customs and habits are disappearing and the entire life of the proletarian family is being recreated on a basis many find different, new, unaccustomed, strange. Additional confusion is introduced by the fact that in Soviet Russia divorce has been made easier. By a decree of the People's Commissars on December 18 [16], 1917, divorce ceased to be a luxury available only to the wealthy; no longer must a woman worker wait months, even years, to separate from a husband who has subjected her to drunkenness, coarse behavior, beatings. Now divorce by mutual consent can be obtained within two weeks at most. But this very ease of divorce, which is a blessing to those women who were unhappy in their marriage, frightens other women, especially those accustomed to look upon the husband as breadwinner and the sole support of life. These latter do not see that *women must learn to search for support in other places, to seek and receive it not from an individual man but from the collective, from the state.*

There is no hiding the truth: the typical former family, where the man was head and breadwinner and the woman existed only in relationship to her husband, without will, time or money of her own, is changing before our eyes. There is no need to fear this. Only our ignorance forces us to think that all that to which we are accustomed will never change. "As it was, so shall it be"—nothing could be more mistaken than this saying. If one reads about how people lived in earlier times, it becomes clear that everything changes, that there are no given customs, no set form of government, no specific morality which remains unchanging. The family also has changed its form many times in the history of mankind, has been quite different from the way we see it today. There was a time when they considered the only correct form to be the maternal-kinship family, that is, a family headed by an older woman, around whom lived and worked together her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren.

There was also the patriarchal family, the head of which was the father-master, around whom, under his paternal gaze and subordinated to his will and law, lived his children and grandchildren. It is still possible to find such families among the peasantry in the countryside. The practices of such families are different than those of the city workers, and there are many customs which have no place in the family of the city proletariat. The structure and customs of the family vary also from nation to nation. Among some peoples, such as the Turks, Arabs and Persians, a man can take several wives. There were and still are tribes where, in contrast, one woman may have several husbands. We are accustomed to a man expecting that a young woman will remain a virgin until marriage, but there have been peoples where a woman boasted of the number of her lovers, wearing on the hands and legs as many rings as she had had men. Many such customs which might surprise us and we might consider wrong, other peoples consider right and proper, while our laws and customs seem "Greek" to them. Thus there is no reason to recoil in fright from the fact that changes are occurring in the family, that the old and unneeded are being discarded, and that before our very eyes the relations between men and women are being transformed. It is necessary only to examine what in family life has become obsolete and what laws and customs in the relations between men and women—workers and peasants—will best fit with the tenor of life in our new workers' Soviet Russia. That which suits the new life will be retained, but the old remnants from the accursed day of bondage and of domination by landlords and capitalists must be swept out along with the property owners and the enemies of the proletariat and the poor.

The family with which the city and village proletariat is accustomed is one of those bits of the past. One such a family—separate, strong, accepting marriage blessed by the priest to be permanent—was necessary to all of its members. Without the family, who would have fed, clothed, and raised the children, who would have taught them what they needed to know? Orphanage was, in earlier times, one of the bitterest of fates. In the traditional family the husband worked and provided for his wife and children, while the wife took care of the house and raised the children. But during the past century this traditional family has fallen apart in all countries where capital dominates, where factories and other capitalist enterprises based on wage labor have rapidly developed. Its customs and morals are changing along with the general conditions of life. The first major change in the basic nature of the family has come along with wage labor by women. Formerly the only breadwinner was the man. However, during the last fifty to sixty years in Russia (in other countries earlier) capitalism has forced women to seek work outside the family, outside the home. The wages of the male breadwinner were insufficient, and thus the woman had to seek wage work and to knock on the factory door. Each year the number of working class women working outside the home, at the factory or other daily wage work, as saleswomen, office clerks, servants, washer-women, waitresses, increases. Statistics show that before the world war began in 1914, sixty million women in the countries of Europe and America were earning wages of their own. During the war the number increased. About half of these women were married. But what kind of family life is this now, where the wife-mother is away at work eight hours a day, and away ten hours with travel time! Household affairs are neglected; the children grow up without maternal supervision, spending more time on the streets and exposed to the danger there. The wife, mother-worker, strains herself to fulfill three roles simultaneously: to do her own work at the factory, printshop or office the same as her husband, to take care of the house, and to look after the children. Capitalism has put an unbearable burden upon the shoulders of the woman; it turns her into a wage worker but does not lighten her household or maternal duties. The woman's shoulders bend under this unbearable triple load, from her breast escapes a stifled groan, and tears are always in her eyes. "Women's life" always was difficult, but never so hard, so cheerless, as it is for millions of working women under capital, in the age of industrial production.

The more quickly wage labor by women spreads, the faster the old family breaks down. What kind of family life is there when husband and wife work different shifts! What kind

of family life is there if the wife has no time even to fix meals! What kind of parents if, after a full day of hard work, they can find no time for the children! Formerly the mother worked at household tasks and the children grew up around her, under her protective watch. Now, the woman hurries to the factory when the whistle blows, and then again at the whistle hurries home in order to try to take care of her household tasks, and then again, without enough sleep, to work again. For the working married woman, life is more like penal servitude. In such circumstances the family disintegrates, falls apart. Many of the things which held the family together disappear. *The family ceases to be necessary, either for its members or for society.* The old family structure becomes a burden.

What held the former strong, cohesive family together? First, the fact that the family breadwinner was the husband and father. Second, the family economy was essential to all members. Third, that the children were raised by their parents. What remains of this kind of family? We already have noted that the husband has ceased to be the sole breadwinner. The wife-worker earns wages along with him. She has learned to support herself, her children, and sometimes even her husband. There remains only the functions of housekeeping and the care and instruction of young children. Let us look further at whether even these tasks are not to be taken from the family.

## 2. Household Work Ceasing to be a Necessity

There was a time when the entire life of women of the poorer class, in the city as well as in the country, was passed in the bosom of the family. Beyond the threshold of her own house, the woman knew nothing and doubtless hardly wished to know anything. To compensate for this, she had within her own house a most varied group of occupations, of a most necessary and useful kind, not only to the family itself but also to the entire society. The woman did everything that is now done by any working woman or peasant woman. She cooked, she washed, she cleaned the house, she went over and mended the family clothing; but she not only did that. She had also to discharge a great number of duties which are no longer fulfilled by the woman of to-day; she spun wool and linen; she wove cloth and garments, she knitted stockings, she made lace, and she took up, as far as her resources permitted, the pickling and smoking of preserved foods; she made beverages for the household; she moulded her own candles. How manifold were the duties of the woman of earlier times! That is how the life of our mothers and our grandmothers passed. Even in our own days, in some remote village far out in the country, far from the railroads and the big rivers, you may still run across little spots where this mode of life of the good old times has been preserved unchanged, in which the mistress of the house is overburdened with labours of which the working women of the big cities and of the populous industrial regions have for a long time had no idea.

## 3. The Industrial Work of Woman in the Home

In the days of our grandmothers this domestic work was an absolutely necessary and useful thing, on which depended the well-being of the family; the more the mistress of the house applied herself to these duties, the better was life in the house, and the more order and affluence it presented. Even the State was able to draw some profit from this activity of woman as a housekeeper. For, as a matter of fact, the woman of other days did not limit herself to preparing potato soup, but her hands also created many valuable products such as cloth, thread, butter, etc., all of which were things which could serve as commodities on the market and which therefore could be considered as merchandise, as things of value.

It is true that in the time of our grandmothers and great-grandmothers their labour was not estimated in terms of money. But every man, whether he was a peasant or a worker, sought for a wife a woman with "hands of gold," as is still the proverbial saying among the people. For the resources of the husband alone, without the wife's domestic work, would have been insufficient to keep their future household going. But on this point, the interests of the State,

the interests of the nation, coincided with those of the husband: the more active the woman turned out to be in the bosom of her family, the more she created products of all kinds: cloth, leather, wool, the surplus of which was sold in the neighbouring market; and thus the economic prosperity of the country as a whole was increased.

#### 4. The Married Woman and the Factory.

But capitalism has changed all this ancient mode of living. All that was formerly produced in the bosom of the family is now being manufactured in quantity in workshops and factories. The machine has supplanted the active fingers of the wife. What housekeeper would now occupy herself in moulding candles, spinning wool, weaving cloth? All these products can be bought in the shop next door. Formerly, every young girl would learn to knit stockings. Do you ever see a young working woman now knitting her own stockings? In the first place, she would not have the time. Time is money, and no one wants to waste money in an unproductive manner, that is, without getting some profit from it. Now every housekeeper who is also a working woman is more interested in buying her stockings ready-made than losing her time by making them herself. Few and far between are the working women who would take up their time in pickling cucumbers or in making preserves when they remember that the grocery store next door has pickles and preserves ready to sell. Even if the product sold in the store is of an inferior quality, and even though the factory preserves are not as good as those made at home by the hands of an economical housekeeper, the working woman nevertheless has neither the time nor the strength which must be applied in any extensive operations of this kind for her own household. However this may be, the fact is that the contemporary family is becoming more and more liberated from all domestic labours, without which concern our grandmothers could hardly have imagined a family. What was formerly produced in the bosom of the family is now produced by the common labour of working men and working women in factories and shops.

#### 5. Individual Housekeeping Doomed.

The family consumes but no longer produces. The essential labours of the housekeeper are now four in number: matters of cleanliness (cleaning the floors, dusting, heating, care of lamps, etc.), cooking (preparation of dinners and suppers), washing, and the care of the linen and clothing of the family (darning and mending).

These are painful and exhausting labours; they absorb all the time and all the energies of the working woman, who must in addition put in her hours of labour in a factory. But it is nevertheless certain that the task of our grandmothers included a much greater number of operations. And in addition, they possessed a quality which is completely lacking in the household labours of the working woman of our day: the latter's labours do not create any new values; they do not contribute to the prosperity of the country.

The working woman would in vain spend all the day from morning to evening cleaning her home, washing and ironing the linen, using herself up in ceaseless efforts to keep her worn-out clothing in order, she might kill herself preparing with her modest resources such food as might please her, and there would nevertheless at nightfall remain not one material result of all her day's work, and she would have created with her indefatigable hands nothing that could be considered as a commodity on the commercial market. Even if a working woman should live a thousand years, there would never be any change for her. There would always be a new layer of dust to be removed from the mantlepiece, her husband would always come in hungry at night, her little tots would always bring in mud on their shoes. The work of the housekeeping woman is becoming more useless day by day, more unproductive.

#### 6. The Dawn of Collective Housekeeping.

The individual household has passed its zenith. It is being replaced more and more by collective housekeeping. The working woman will sooner or later need to take care of her own dwelling no longer; in the communist society of to-morrow this work will be carried



on by a special category of working women who will do nothing else. The wives of the rich have long been freed from these annoying and tiring duties. Why should the working woman continue to carry out these painful tasks? In Soviet Russia, the life of the working woman should be surrounded with the same ease, with the same brightness, with the same hygiene, with the same beauty, which has thus far surrounded only the women of the richer classes. In a communist society the working women will no longer have to spend their few, alas too few, hours of leisure in cooking, since *there will be in a communist society public restaurants and central kitchens* to which everybody may come to take his meals.

These establishments have already been on the increase in all countries, even under the capitalist regime. In fact, for half a century the number of restaurants and cafes in all the great cities of Europe has increased day by day; they have sprung up like mushrooms after autumn rain. But while under the capitalist system only people with well-lined purses could afford to take their meals in a restaurant, in the communist city anyone who likes may come to eat in the central kitchens and restaurants. The case will be the same with washing and other work: the working woman will no longer be obliged to sink in an ocean of filth or to ruin her eyes in darning her stockings or mending her linen, she will simply carry these things to the *central laundries* each week, and take them out again each week already washed and ironed. The working woman will have one care less to face. Also, special clothes-mending shops will give the working women the opportunity to devote their evenings to instructive reading, to healthy recreation, instead of spending them as at present in exhausting labour. Therefore, the four last duties still remaining to burden our women, as we have seen above, will soon also disappear under the triumphant communist regime. And the working women will surely have no cause to regret this. Communist society will only have broken the domestic yoke of women in order to render her life richer, happier, freer and more complete.

#### 7. The Child's Upbringing Under Capitalism.

But what will happen of the family after all these labours of individual housekeeping have disappeared? We still have *the children* to deal with. But here also the State of the working comrades will come to the rescue of the family by creating a substitute for the family. Society will gradually take charge of all that formerly devolved on parents. Under the capitalist regime, *the instruction of the child has ceased to be the duty of the parents*. The children were taught in schools. Once the child had attained school age, the parents breathed more freely. Beginning with this moment, the intellectual development of their child ceased to be their affair. But all the obligations of the family towards the child were not therefore finished. There was still the duty of feeding children, buying them shoes, clothing them, making skilled and honest workers of them, who might be able when the time came to live by themselves and to feed and support their parents in their old age. However, it was very unusual for a worker's family to be able to fulfill entirely all these obligations towards their children; their low wages did not permit them even to give the children enough to eat, while lack of leisure prevented the parents from devoting to the education of the rising generation the full attention which it demanded. The family was supposed to bring up the children. But did it really? As a matter of fact, it is the street which brings up the children of the proletariat. The children of the proletarians are ignorant of the amenities of family life, pleasures which we still shared with our own fathers and mothers.

Furthermore, the low wages of the parents, insecurity, even hunger, frequently bring it about that when hardly ten years of age, the son of the proletarian already becomes in his turn an independent worker. Now, as soon as the child (boy or girl) begins to earn money, he considers himself the master of his own person to such an extent that the words and counsels of his parents cease to have any effect upon him, the authority of the parents weakens and obedience is at an end. As the domestic labours of the family die out one by one, all obligations of support and training will be fulfilled by society in place of the parents. Under

the capitalist regime, children were frequently, too frequently, a heavy and unbearable burden on the proletarian family.

#### 8. The Child and the Communist State.

Here also the communist society will come to the aid of the parents. In Soviet Russia, owing to the care of the Commissariats of Public Education and of Social Welfare, great advances are being made, and already many things have been done in order to facilitate for the family the task of bringing up and supporting the children. There are homes for the very small babies; day nurseries, kindergartens, children's colonies and homes, infirmaries, and health resorts for sick children, restaurants, free lunches at school, free distribution of textbooks, of warm clothing, of shoes to the pupils of the educational establishments—does not all this sufficiently show that the child is passing out of the confines of the family and being removed from the shoulders of the parents on to those of the community?

The care of children by the parents consisted of three distinct parts: (1) the care necessarily devoted to very young babies; (2) the bringing up of the child; (3) the instruction of the child. As for the instruction of children in primary schools, and later in gymnasiums and universities, it has become the duty of the State, even in capitalist society. The other occupations of the working class, its conditions of life, imperatively dictated even to capitalist society the creation, for the benefit of the young, of playgrounds, infants' schools, homes, etc., etc. The more the workers became conscious of their rights, the better were they organized in any specific State, the more society would show itself to be concerned with relieving the family of the care of the children. But bourgeois society was afraid of going too far in this matter of meeting the interests of the working class, lest it contribute in this way to the disintegration of the family. The capitalists themselves are not unaware of the fact that the family of old, with the wife a slave and the man responsible for the support and well-being of the family, that the family of this type is the best weapon to stifle the proletarian effort towards liberty, to weaken the revolutionary spirit of the working man and working woman. Worry for his family takes the backbone out of the worker, obliges him to compromise with capital. The father and the mother, what will they not do when their children are hungry? Contrary to the practice of capitalist society, which has not been able to transform the education of youth into a truly social function, a State task, communist society will consider the social education of the rising generation as the very basis of its laws and customs, as the corner-stone of the new edifice. Not the family of the past, petty and narrow, with its quarrels between the parents, with its exclusive interest in its own offspring, will mould for us the man of the society of tomorrow. Our new man, in our new society, is to be moulded by socialist organizations, such as playgrounds, gardens, homes, and many other such institutions, in which the child will pass the greater part of the day and where intelligent educators will make of him a communist who is conscious of the greatness of this sacred motto: solidarity, comradeship, mutual aid, devotion to the collective life.

#### 9. The Mother's Livelihood Assured.

But now, with the bringing up gone and with the instruction gone, what will remain of the obligations of the family towards its children, particularly after it has been relieved also of the greater portion of the material cares involved in having a child, except for the care of a very small baby while it still needs its mother's attention, while it is still learning to walk, clinging to its mother's skirts? Here again the communist State hastens to the aid of the working mother. No longer shall the child-mother be bowed down with a baby in her arms! The Workers' State charges itself with the duty of assuring a livelihood to every mother, whether she be legitimately married or not, as long as she is suckling her child, of creating everywhere maternity homes, of establishing in all the cities and all the villages day nurseries and other similar institutions, in order thus to permit the woman to serve the State in a useful manner and to be a mother at the same time.

### 10. Marriage No Longer a Chain.

Let the working mothers be reassured. The communist society is not intending to take the children away from the parents, nor to tear the baby from its mother's breast; nor has it any intention of resorting to violence in order to destroy the family as such. No such thing! Such are not the aims of the communist society. What do we observe to-day? The worn-out family is breaking up. It is gradually freeing itself from all the domestic labours which formerly were as so many pillars supporting the family as a social unit. Housekeeping? It also appears to have outlived its usefulness. The children? The parent-proletarians are already unable to take care of them; they can either them neither subsistence nor education. This is the situation from which both parents and children suffer in equal measure. The communist society therefore approaches the working woman and the working man and says to them: "You are young, you love each other. Everyone has the right to happiness. Therefore live your life. Do not flee happiness. Do not fear marriage, even though marriage was truly a chain for the working man and woman of capitalist society. Above all, do not fear, young and healthy as you are, to give to your country new workers, new citizen-children. The society of the workers is in need of new working forces; it hails the arrival of every new-born child in the world. Nor should you be concerned because of the future of your child: your child will know neither hunger nor cold. It will not be unhappy nor abandoned to its fate as would have been the case in capitalist society. A subsistence ration and solicitous care are secured to the child and to the mother by the communist society, by the Workers' State, as soon as the child arrives in the world. The child will be fed, it will be brought up, it will be educated by the care of the communist Fatherland; but this Fatherland will by no means undertake to tear the child away from such parents as may desire to participate in the education of their little ones. The communist society will take upon itself all the duties involved in the education of the child, but the paternal joys, the maternal satisfaction—these will not be taken away from those who show themselves capable of appreciating and understanding these joys." Can this be called a destruction of the family by means of violence?—or a forcible separation of child and mother?

### 11. The Family a Union of Affection and Comradeship.

There is no escaping the fact: the old type of family has seen its day. It is not the fault of the communist State, it is the result of the changed conditions of life. *The family is ceasing to be a necessity of the State, as it was in the past*; on the contrary, it is worse than useless, since it needlessly holds back the female workers from more productive and far more serious work. Nor is it any longer necessary to the members of the family themselves, since the task of bringing up the children, which was formerly that of the family, is passing more and more into the hands of the collective. But on the ruins of the former family we shall soon see a new form rising which will involve altogether different relations between men and women, and which will be *a union of affection and comradeship, a union of two equal members of the communist society, both of them free, both of them independent, both of them workers*. No more domestic "servitude" for women. No more inequality within the family. No more fear on the part of the woman lest she remain without support or aid with little ones in her arms if her husband should desert her. The woman in the communist city no longer depends on her husband but on her work. It is not her husband but her robust arms which will support her. There will be no more anxiety as to the fate of her children. The State of the Workers will assume responsibility for these. Marriage will be purified of all its material elements, of all money calculations, which constitute a hideous blemish on family life in our days. Marriage is henceforth to be transformed into a sublime union of two souls in love with each other, having faith in the other; this union promises to each working man and to each working woman, simultaneously, the most complete happiness, the maximum of satisfaction which can be the lot of creatures who are conscious of themselves and of the life which surrounds

them. *This free union*, which is strong in the comradeship with which it is inspired, *instead of the conjugal slavery of the past—that is what the communist society of to-morrow offers to both men and women*. Once the conditions of labour have been transformed, and the material security of working women has been increased, and after marriage such as was performed by the Church—that so-called indissoluble marriage which was at bottom merely a fraud—after this marriage has given place to the free and honest union of men and women who are lovers and comrades, another shameful scourge will also be seen to disappear, another frightful evil which is a stain on humanity and which falls with all its weight on the hungry working woman: prostitution.

This evil we owe to the economic system now in force, to the institution of private property. Once the latter has been abolished, the trade in women will automatically disappear.

Therefore let the women of the working class cease to worry over the fact that the family as at present constituted is doomed to disappear. They will do much better to hail with joy the dawn of a new society which will liberate woman from domestic servitude, which will lighten the burden of motherhood for woman, and in which, finally, we shall see the disappearance of the most terrible of the curses weighing upon women, prostitution.

The woman who is called upon to struggle in the great cause of the liberation of the workers—such a woman should know that in the new State there will be no more room for such petty divisions as were formerly understood: "These are my own children; to them I owe all my maternal solicitude, all my affection; those are your children, my neighbour's children; I am not concerned with them. I have enough to do with my own." Henceforth the worker-mother, who is conscious of her social function, will rise to a point where she is no longer differentiates between *yours* and *mine*; she must remember that there are henceforth only *our* children, those of the communist State, the common possession of all the workers.

## 12. Social Equality of Men and Women.

The Workers' State has need of a new form of relation between the sexes. The narrow and exclusive affection of the mother for her own children must expand until it embraces all the children of the great proletarian family. In place of the indissoluble marriage based on the servitude of woman, we shall see rise the free union, fortified by the love and the mutual respect of the two members of the Workers' State, equal in their rights and in their obligations. In place of the individual and egotistic family, there will arise a great universal family of workers, in which all the workers, men and women, will be, above all, workers, comrades. Such will be the relation between men and women in the communist society of to-morrow. This new relation will assure to humanity all the joys of so-called free love ennobled by a true social equality of the mates, joys which were unknown to the commercial society of the capitalist regime.

Make way for healthy blossoming children: make way for a vigorous youth that clings to life and to its joys, which is free in its sentiments and in its affections. Such is the watchword of the communist society. In the name of equality, of liberty, and of love, we call upon the working women and the working men, peasant women and peasants, courageously and with faith to take up the work of the reconstruction of human society with the object of rendering it more perfect, more just, and more capable of assuring to the individual the happiness which he deserves. The red flag of the social revolution which will shelter, after Russia, other countries of the world also, already proclaims to us the approach of the heaven on earth to which humanity has been aspiring for centuries.

A. Kollontai, *Sem'ia i kommunisticheskoe gosudarstvo* (Moscow, 1918). The first section was translated by the editor, the remainder as translated in Schlesinger, *The Family*, pp. 59-69.

## ADMIRAL KOLCHAK ASSUMES POWER

November 18, 1918

*An effort to unite anti-Bolshevik movements in the Siberian, Urals and Volga regions (including Komuch—see July 25, 1918, above) led to the forming of the Provisional Government of all Russia, commonly referred to as the Directory. Composed of five persons who were to balance left and right political viewpoints, it was an unstable alliance. To complicate matters it established its headquarters at Omsk, in Western Siberia, which had been a center of conservative movements. The rising tensions between conservative military officers and Socialist Revolutionary political figures finally resulted in a coup d'etat by military officers on the night of November 17, leading the next day to the proclamation of Admiral A. V. Kolchak as Supreme Ruler (effectively, dictator). The first three documents are the statements announcing the transfer of power and Admiral Kolchak's acceptance; the next two documents are conflicting explanations of events, one by the new government and one by the two SR members of the Directory and two SR officials of the Directory (these two documents were published in the weeks just after the event).*

## 1. RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AT OMSK NOVEMBER 18, 1918.

In view of the extraordinary events which have interrupted the activities of the Provisional Government of All-Russia, the Council of Ministers resolves:

That it takes over the entire Governmental authority. Owing to the difficult situation of the State and the necessity to concentrate all the power in the hands of a single person, the Council of Ministers resolves:

That it transfers for the time being the Governmental power to Admiral Alexander Vasilievitch Kolchak, with the title of Supreme Ruler.

## 2. STATUTE ENACTED NOVEMBER 18, 1918, AT OMSK CONCERNING THE TEMPORARY FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

(1.) The supreme governmental power is temporarily vested in the Supreme Ruler;

(2.) The Supreme Ruler is in command of all the armed forces of Russia;

(3.) The entire executive power is vested in the Supreme Ruler. In conformity with law a certain amount of power in affairs of subordinate administration is entrusted to respective local bodies and individuals. The Supreme Ruler will, in particular, undertake extraordinary measures to reconstitute and supply the military forces. He will also reestablish civil law and order;

(4.) All projects of laws and executive orders will be examined by the Council of Ministers and upon being passed by that body are to be approved by the Supreme Ruler;

(5.) All acts of the Supreme Ruler are countersigned by the President of the Council of Ministers or by the Chief of the respective governmental branch with the exception of executive orders appointing or dismissing the President of the Council of Ministers, which are countersigned by the Chief of Affairs of the Council of Ministers;

(6.) In case of severe illness or decease of the Supreme Ruler or in case of his renunciation of the office of Supreme Ruler, the supreme authority will be vested in the Council of Ministers.

## 3. ADMIRAL KOLCHAK'S PROCLAMATION TO THE PEOPLE NOVEMBER 18, 1918.

On November 18, 1918, the Provisional Government of Russia fell. The Council of Ministers took over all power and transferred it to me, Alexander Kolchak, Admiral of the Russian Fleet.

Having accepted the burden of power under exceptionally difficult circumstances, in time of civil strife and complete disorganization of the life of the State, I declare that I will not

enter the path of reaction nor the fatal path of party strife. My principal aim will be: the formation of a disciplined army, victory over Bolshevism and the reestablishment of law and order so that the people can freely choose the form of Government they desire and so realize the great ideas of liberty which are to-day spread over the whole of the Universe.

Citizens, I summon you to union, to struggle and to sacrifice.

(Signed) Admiral KOLCHAK,  
Supreme Ruler

#### 4. OFFICIAL VERSION OF EVENTS

As soon as the Volga region and Siberia were freed from the Bolsheviks a contest set in between two principles of administration, namely, the practical non-party policy of the Siberian Government at Omsk and the narrow party views of the Socialistic Revolutionaries at Samara, as represented by the Committee of Members of the Constitutional Assembly. The regeneration of Russia required the unification of authority. By means of compromise a Directory was formed at a conference in Ufa, but there was no internal agreement between its Socialist and non-Socialist members, and that eventually led to its downfall. Some of the Socialist Revolutionaries of the Directory were evidently still under the guidance of their Central Committee and when Avksentiev and Zenzinov delayed in carrying out the dictates of that Committee, they received severe reminders by telegraph of their duty to the party.

Nevertheless, the authority of the Directory was acknowledged by the Siberian Government in the hope that practical business would be continued and party tendencies relinquished as agreed upon at the Ufa Conference. When, however, towards October, the so-called National or People's Army, formed by the Committee of Members of the Constituent Assembly, began to weaken from Bolshevik pressure and internal disorganisation, it was clear that the influence of the Social Revolutionaries amongst the popular masses commenced to wane. They then decided to gather fresh strength from increased organisation of military establishments of a party character. This fraction paid no heed to frequent warnings from civil and military authorities of preparations for rebellion and of the effects of demoralising propaganda in the young Army, whereby the regeneration of Russia was again endangered. Nor did they take any decided steps when the Central Committee of their party issued a proclamation on October 22, 1918, openly advocating armed action against the Supreme Authority and recommending the formation of special troops for the Social Revolutionary Party, that is to say, advising the creation of an illegal military force. That proclamation was not only not actively resisted by the Directory, but received the approval of the Congress of members of the Constituent Assembly at Ufa as represented by the majority of its anti-State and internationalist elements.

In spite of these actions, and after the proclamation, Avksentiev and Zenzinov reported on the All-Russian Government to the Central Committee of the Soc. Rev. Party, and continued to negotiate with it by wire direct.

It therefore became evident to all persons in society and the Government, who thought in terms of statesmanship, that the Central Committee of the S.R. Party, guided by its anti-State group—the same group that disintegrated, emasculated, and ruined, the Provisional Government—was speaking and working through the medium of the Socialist members of the Directory.

The public conscience resented this danger to a Government Administration, which had been consolidated with so much sacrifice. It created an atmosphere of mistrust, alarm, and hostility, in which the Directory ceased to have any authority, and became automatically powerless. The collapse of the Directory, therefore, was not caused by the reactionary designs of any set of politicians. It was isolated and deprived of any of the elements of the State. The Socialist Revolutionary members of the Directory killed it with the anti-State politics of their own party.

The Council of Ministers recognised the downfall of the Directory in order to save the supreme authority from the deadly effects of party spirit, and the lacerated country from a repetition of the fatal experiences of the war and revolution. They restored authority to the trustworthy keeping of the Siberian Government, which, as the most considerable factor in the regeneration of Russia, and for the sake of State unity and patriotism, effected its own abolition, and transferred the entire machinery of the State to the All-Russian Government.

In view of the foregoing the Council of Ministers found it impossible to obtain the re-establishment of the Directory, which had lost authority and the confidence of the public. The Council then took upon itself the establishment of the Supreme Authority by passing it on to a Supreme Ruler with distinct guarantees for legal administration and unity of legislation.

Needless to say that since the events of November 18 the Government, headed by the Supreme Ruler, has contained no reactionary elements whatever. It is supported by all the moderate-socialistic, co-operative, democratic, bourgeois, and military elements, which have followed the Siberian Government from the very beginning. After the known appeal of these numerous public groups and delegations to the Supreme Ruler, and after the declaration of the valiant General Denikin as to the incorporation of all the South-Russian Governments and territorial formations united by the heroic Volunteer Army of staunch patriots, only those persons can talk of the reactionary attempt of November 18 whose sense of statesmanship has been blunted by feelings of personal or party resentment.

Henceforward there is only one sacred duty, and that is to safely pilot the previous ship of the Russian State through the great difficulties and dangers that surround it, and to place it at the disposal of a Supreme Government, elected by the voice of the nation, and in accordance with the will and wishes of the Russian People.

## 5. THE SR EXPLANATION

The [below signed] personages were arrested during the night of November 18 by officers and soldiers of Ataman Krasilnikov, who, as was confirmed later, acted in full agreement with Col. Volkov and Col. Katanaiev.

They were taken to an agricultural school, which had been made into barracks, and was occupied by Krasilnikov's detachment. Evasive replies were given to questions as to the reason of their arrest, such as: "The order was given by the supreme authorities;" and it was only by chance they learned from a newspaper that the power had passed into the hands of the old Siberian Government, with Kolchak at its head.

Starynkevich, the Minister of Justice, came to see them about 2 p.m. on November 19. A little earlier they had had a visit from Capt. Gerke, Gen. Krasilnikov's Chief of Staff. He presented an ultimatum, emanating from "a very highly placed personage," which gave them an hour to choose between remaining in prison, "with all the possible consequences" and leaving the country under an armed escort. They chose exile as the least of two evils.

Starynkevich, when he came, intimated that they were free to come and go, but that their future fate had not been decided. He affected to know nothing of Gerke's Mission and proposed—until Kolchak and the Council of Ministers should decide their fate—that they should remain where they were "at liberty," and where (as he said) they had a "safe" guard, for he could not guarantee their security anywhere else. As no guarantee of the inviolability of their persons had been given to them, they refused this suggestion and preferred to go into the town itself. At their request they were taken to Avksentiev's quarters, where they were able to see friends and relations, but their "free" existence came to a speedy termination; in the night Gerke and some officers reappeared and rudely asked with whom they had had dealings and particularly whether they had not had a secret agreement with the Czechoslovaks; and next day soldiers formed a cordon round their house and all communication with the outer world was cut off.

At the same time their fate was communicated to them by Starynkevich; either to be exiled to a foreign country or to be sent to one of the prisons situated in the distant corners of Siberia. They were denied the possibility of living anywhere on Russian territory.

They chose exile and accepted the conditions imposed—to abstain from propaganda within the bounds of Siberia and to travel as ordinary private people. The latter condition they accepted after having ascertained that the conspirators had attained their end, which was to divide and suppress the Directory. As a matter of fact, two Members of the Directory with their deputies had been arrested and deprived of all power of resistance; Gen. Boldyrev, another Member of the Directory, was away at the front. He was said to have been obliged to bow before the *fait accompli* of the *coup d'état*. Of the two other Members who were at Omsk, Vinogradov recognised the *coup d'état*, but refused the post offered to him in the new Government, and Vologodsky, in spite of the solemn engagement, drawn up by the Ufa Conference and confirmed by him on entering the Directory, not only recognised the legality of the *coup d'état*, but entered the new Government and put himself at the head of it.

After they had consented to the conditions imposed, and the hour for their departure had been fixed, Gen. Khoroshkin and Klyuchnikov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, were sent to them by Admiral Kolchak and the Council of Ministers with several new conditions, which they refused to accept. One was that they should not re-enter Russian until a single Government over all Russian territory had been formed, and another demanded that abroad they should abstain from all manifestations against the Government newly constituted at Omsk.

At 2 a.m. on November 20 they left Omsk with a guard of 80 men for Chan-Chun Station, from whence they were able to travel across China as free men.

This, they maintain, will show the falseness of the allegations that they "refused to use their liberty," and that they requested the All-Russian Government not to liberate them, but to allow them to go abroad, in which case they promised to take no active part in Russian politics.

The authors of the document allege that the following assertions in the official communications by which it is sought to explain and justify the *coup d'état* were false and tendentious:—Firstly, that the *coup d'état* was produced "under the pressure of wide strata of the population, social groups, and the most powerful parties and organisations," and, secondly, that these members of the Directory had been arrested for their anti-State policy, which was manifested by the fact that, being placed under the control of the Central Committee of the Social-Revolutionaries and having to account to it for their actions, they were evidently connected with politicians who were conducting a vigorous propaganda in the young Russian Army with the object of dividing the later and creating a party-army.

The *coup d'état* was accomplished not by the population, who were silent, but by a small group of persons, united for some long time past, who understood one another and who had silently matured this criminal plan.

The names of the principal persons and their organisations are known to everybody. These are the Right Kadet circles—rather weak numerically—and the industrial and commercial circles, in direct contact with monarchical groups of officers and with a portion of the old Government of Siberia, transformed by the wish of the Directory into an All-Russian Council of Ministers, which ever since its first appearance at Omsk had strongly opposed the realisation of the nation's sovereign rights in spite of the solemn engagement to use every means to maintain the coalition power created at Ufa.

The authors of the plot chose as agents to accomplish it, the group of officers headed by Col. Volkov, a well-known organiser of plots and arrests, as also the Atamans Krasilnikov and Katanaiev.



Afterwards the conspirators handed over to justice the officers named, whom they should have thanked for having placed in the hands stretched out to receive it this "heavy burden" and "cross" of power, as the official communications hypocritically called it.

In the action of the Directory and in the conduct of its members who belonged to the Social-Revolutionary Party there was no act which gave ground for speaking of anti-State theories, of submission to the orders of the Central Committee of the party, or of a tendency to unhinge the loyalty of the young army, nor is any proof advanced in support of these theories. The *coup d'état* was inspired by the hope of setting up a military dictatorship in order to realise an anti-democratic class policy, a policy of retrospective vengeance.

(Signed) N. Avksentiev  
V. Zenzinov  
E. Rogovsky  
A. Argunov

*Documents Relating to the Organization and Purposes of the Anti-Bolshevik Forces in Russia*, p. 1; *Daily Review of the Foreign Press, Neutral Press Supplement*, May 23, 1919, pp. 88-89.



TROTSKY ON DISCIPLINE  
ORDER TO THE TROOPS ON THE SOUTHERN FRONT  
November 24, 1918

*One of the striking features of the literature of the Civil War is the continual repetition of the order to solve disciplinary, military and other problems by shooting and hanging. Lenin and Trotsky in particular constantly demanded such measures. The following is an example of this approach. While this order applies primarily to soldiers, others called for similar measures against civilians, especially the bourgeoisie.*

ORDER

*By the Chairman of the Revolutionary War Council of the Republic to the troops and Soviet institutions on the Southern Front, November 24, 1918, No. 65*

Krasnov and the foreign capitalists who are behind him have thrown on to the Voronezh Front hundreds of hired agents who, under various guises, have penetrated Red Army units and are there carrying on base work, corrupting our men and inciting them to desert. In a few shaky units on the Voronezh front one can actually observe the signs of demoralisation, cowardice and self-seeking. While, on all other fronts and in the case of all other armies, the Red forces are chasing the enemy and advancing, on the Voronezh front senseless, criminal retreats and the break-up of whole regiments are taking place frequently.

I declare that from now on an end must be put to this, by ruthless means.

1) Every scoundrel who incites anyone to retreat, to desert or not to fulfil a military order, is to be shot.

2) Every soldier of the Red Army who voluntarily deserts his post is to be shot.

3) Every soldier who throws away his rifle or sells part of his uniform is to be shot.

4) Battle-police units are to be stationed along the entire front-line zone, in order to catch deserters. Any soldier who tries to offer resistance to these units is to be shot on the spot.

5) All local Soviets and Committees of the Poor, are obligated, on their part, to take all measures to catch deserters. Deserter-hunts are to be carried out twice in every 24 hours,

*at 8am and 8pm. Captured deserters are to be handed over to the headquarters of the nearest unit or to the nearest military commissariat.*

*6) Persons guilty of harbouring deserters are liable to be shot.*

*7) Houses in which deserters are found will be burnt down.*

Death to self-seekers and traitors!

Death to deserters and agents of Krasnov!

Long live the honourable soldiers of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army!

Trotsky, *How the Revolution Armed*, Vol. 1, pp. 487-488.



### ALTMAN, "FUTURISM" AND PROLETARIAN ART

December 15, 1918

*The futurists rejected the art of the past, and many felt that the individual artist working at the easel would be replaced by collective or mass art: monuments, decorations for festivals and holidays, stage design, etc. Prominent among them was Natan Isaevich Altman, who played an active role in agit-prop art and directed the massive covering of the Winter Palace Square in Petrograd with Cubist and Futurist art for the first anniversary of the October Revolution in 1918. In this essay he not only defends those who worked with the new regime (most of the intelligentsia did not at first), but engages in the dispute over the relationship between art and the proletariat. In particular he rejects the argument that proletarian art had to be art by proletarians or showing workers, defining it instead as art "constructed on collectivist bases."*

N.I. Altman

#### *Futurism and Proletarian Art*

Certain art circles and private individuals who not so long ago abused us in various "cultural publications" for working with the Soviet government and who knew no other name for us than "bureaucrats" and "perfunctory artists" would now rather like to take our place.

And so a campaign has begun against futurism, which, they say, is a millstone around the worker's neck and whose claims to "being the art of the proletariat" are "ridiculous," etc.

But are they so ridiculous?

Why did it need a whole year of proletarian government and a revolution that encompassed half the world for the "silent to speak up?"

Why did only revolutionary futurism march in step with the October Revolution?

Is it just a question of outward revolutionary fervor, just a mutual aversion to the old forms, that joins futurism with the proletariat?

Not even they deny that futurism is a revolutionary art that is breaking all the old bonds and in this sense is bringing art closer to the proletariat.

We maintain that there is a deeper link between futurism and proletarian creation.

People naive in matters of art are inclined to regard any sketch done by a worker, any poster on which a worker is depicted, as a work of proletarian art.

A worker's figure in heroic pose with a red flag and an appropriate slogan—how temptingly intelligible that is to a person unversed in art and how terribly we need to fight against this pernicious intelligibility.

Art that depicts the proletariat is as much proletarian art as the *Chernosotenets* who has gotten into the Party and can show his membership card is a Communist.

Just like anything the proletariat creates, proletarian art will be collective:

The principle that distinguishes the proletariat as a class from all other classes.

We understand this, not in the sense that one work of art will be made by many artists, but in the sense that while executed by one creator, the work itself will be constructed on collectivist bases.

Take any work of revolutionary, futurist art. People who are used to seeing a depiction of individual objects or phenomena in a picture are bewildered. You cannot make anything out. And indeed, if you take out any one part from a futurist picture, it then represents an absurdity. Because each part of a futurist picture acquires meaning only through the interaction of all the other parts; only in conjunction with them does it acquire the meaning with which the artist imbued it.

A futurist picture lives a *collective life*:

By the same principle on which the proletariat's whole creation is constructed.

Try to distinguish an individual face in a proletarian procession.

Try to understand it as individual persons—absurd.

Only in conjunction do they acquire all their strength, all their meaning.

How is a work of the old art constructed—the art depicting reality around us?

Does every object exist in its own right? They are united only by extrinsic literary content or some other such content. And so cut out any part of an old picture, and it won't change at all as a result. A cup remains the same cup, a figure will be dancing or sitting pensively, just as it was doing before it was cut out.

The link between the individual parts of a work of the old art is the same as between people on Nevsky Prospekt. They have come together by chance, prompted by an external cause, only to go their own ways as soon as possible. Each one for himself, each one wants to be distinguished.

Like the old world, the capitalist world, works of the old art live an individualistic life.

Only futurist art is constructed on collective bases.

Only futurist art is right now the art of the proletariat.

Bowlt, p. 161-164.



## RUSSIAN APPEAL FOR A PEACE TREATY WITH THE ALLIES

LITVINOV TO WILSON

December 24, 1918

*The Soviet government was inclined to see the threat from Allied intervention to be greater than it was, and perhaps as greater than that from the White armies. Therefore, they made repeated efforts in late 1918 and early 1919 to get peace negotiations directly with all or some of the Allied powers. This offer took the form of a letter from Maxim Litvinov, then in Stockholm, to President Wilson in London. It expands on the brief resolution taken at the Sixth All-Russian Congress of Soviets in November. See also the earlier letter from Chicherin to Wilson on October 24, 1918. above.*

Mr. President:

In addition to the general peace offer recently addressed by the Soviet Government to the Allies, I formally informed to-day the Stockholm Ministers of the United States and of

the Allied countries that I am authorised to enter into negotiations for a peaceful settlement of all questions making for hostilities against Russia. The principles proclaimed by you as a possible basis for settling European questions, your avowed efforts and intentions of making the settlement conform to the demands of justice and humanity, induce and justify me to send you this statement, inasmuch as most points of your peace programme are included in the more extensive aspirations of the Russian workers and peasants, now rulers of their country.

It was they who first proclaimed and actually granted to nations the right of self-determination, who suffered most sacrifices in fighting Imperialism and militarism both at home and abroad, who dealt the severest blow to secret diplomacy. And it is partly for these innovations in politics that they have been fiercely attacked by the former ruling classes of Russia and their counterparts in other countries. To justify this attack a network of lies and calumnies has been woven round the activities of the Soviets and forged documents put into circulation.

Unfortunately, Allied statesmen accept all the monstrous accusations against the Soviets at their face value, without taking the trouble to check them. Whilst agents of anti-Soviet parties are allowed and encouraged to move freely in Allied countries and disseminate untruths, representatives of the accused side have never been allowed to put fully their case and to answer the charges made against them.

In fact, the chief aim of the Soviets is to secure for the toiling majority of the Russian people economic liberty, without which political liberty is of no avail to them. For eight months the Soviets endeavoured to realise their aims by peaceful methods without resorting to violence, adhering to the abolition of capital punishment, which abolition had been part of their programme. It was only when their adversaries, the minority of the Russian people, took to terrorist acts against popular members of the Government and invoked the help of foreign troops that the labouring masses were driven to acts of exasperation and gave vent to their wrath and bitter feelings against their former oppressors.

For the Allied invasion of Russian territory not only compelled the Soviets against their own will to militarise the country anew and to divert their energies and resources—so necessary to the economic reconstruction of Russia, exhausted by four years of war in the defence of the country—but also cut off the vital sources of foodstuffs and raw materials, exposing the population to most terrible privations, bordering on starvation. I wish to emphasise that the so-called "Red Terror"—which is grossly exaggerated and misrepresented abroad—was not the cause but the direct result and outcome of Allied intervention.

The Russian workers and peasants fail to understand how foreign countries, which never dreamed of interfering with Russian affairs when Tsarist barbarism and militarism ruled supreme, and even supported that regime, can feel justified in interfering in Russia now, when the working people themselves, after decades of strenuous struggling and countless sacrifices, succeeded in taking power and the destiny of their country into their own hands, aiming at nothing but their own happiness and international brotherhood, constituting no menace to other nations.

The Russian workers and peasants are determined to defend their dearly won power and liberties against invaders with all the means their vast country puts at their disposal, but mindful of the inevitable wanton loss of life and treasure on both sides, and wishing to avert the further ruining of Russia which must result from the continuation of internal and external fighting—they are prepared to go any length of concessions, as far as the real interests of their country are concerned, if they can secure thereby conditions enabling them to work out peacefully their social schemes.

I understand that the question of relations with Russia is now engaging the attention of Allied statesmen. I venture, then, to submit to you, Mr. President, that there are now only two courses open to them.

One is continued open or disguised intervention on the present or on a still larger scale, which means prolongation of war, further embitterment of the Russian masses, intensification of internal strife, unexampled bloodshed, and perhaps total extermination of the Russian bourgeoisie by the exasperated masses, final devastation of the country, and, in case of the interventionists after a long struggle obtaining their end, a White Terror eclipsing the atrocities of the Finnish White Guardists, the inevitable introduction of a military dictatorship, and the restoration of the monarchy, leading to interminable revolutions and upheavals, and paralysing the economic development of the country for long decades.

The other alternative, which I trust may commend itself to you, is impartially to weigh and investigate the one-sided accusations against Soviet Russia, to come to an understanding with the Soviet Government, to withdraw the foreign troops from Russian territory, and to raise the economic blockade—soothing thereby the excited passions of the masses—to help Russia to regain her own sources of supply, and to give her technical advice how to exploit her natural richness in the most effective way, for the benefit of all countries badly in need of foodstuffs and raw materials.

The dictatorship of toilers and producers is not an aim in itself, but the means of building up a new social system under which useful work and equal rights would be provided for all citizens, irrespective of the class to which they had formerly belonged. One may believe in this ideal or not, but it surely gives no justification for sending foreign troops to fight against it, or for arming and supporting classes interested in the restoration of the old system of exploitation of man by man.

I venture to appeal to your sense of justice and impartiality.

I hope and trust, above all, that before deciding on any course of action you will give justice to the demand of *audiat et alter a pars*.

Maxim Litvinov

*The Soviet Union and Peace*, pp. 58-60.



## LUNACHARSKY ON THE STATE AND THE CONTROVERSY IN THE ARTS

December 29, 1918

*The People's Commissariat of Enlightenment, headed by A. V. Lunacharsky, gave support to Futurists and other avant-garde artists. Their proclamations calling for sweeping away all old art bothered many, however, especially as the Commissariat was also engaged in preserving the artistic heritage of Russia. Some of the Futurists showed signs of being willing to bar other schools of artistic expression, and quickly came to dominate the Commissariat's journal, Iskustvo kommuny (Art of the Commune). Lunacharsky soon found it necessary to take to the journal's pages to reassert the values of pluralism in the arts and the government's neutrality on artistic matters. His original draft of this contained a much more direct attack on Mayakovsky.*

A.V. Lunacharsky  
*A Spoonful of Antidote*

Some of my closest collaborators were more than a little troubled by the first issues of the newspaper *Art of the Commune*. Against this background, we must confess, there even arose

a slight conflict between the members of the Commissariat of Education-Northern Region and their colleagues in the Commissariat's Division of Representational Arts.

I admit that I, too, am troubled.

They tell me that the Commissariat's politics in matters of art are strictly defined. It is not in vain, they tell me, that so many heroic efforts have been expended to preserve all sorts of artistic monuments of antiquity; it is not in vain that we have even risked censure for safeguarding 'the nobility's wealth;' we cannot allow an official organ of our Commissariat to picture all artistic property from Adam up to Mayakovsky as a heap of trash to be subject to destruction.

There is also another side to this matter. Tens of times I have announced that the Commissariat of Education should be impartial in its relationship to individual directions in artistic life. As far as questions of form are concerned, the artistic tastes of the People's Commissar and all other representatives of government should not be taken into account. We must grant the opportunity for free development to all artistic personages and groups. We must not allow one current to rub out another, whether it be armed with an acquired traditional glory or a fashionable success.

All too often in the history of humanity we have seen how a bustling fashion has pushed forward the new, striving to bring the old to ruin as quickly as possible; and how, afterward, a subsequent generation has wept over the ruins of beauty, scornfully bypassing the recent princelings of fleeting success. All too often we have seen the reverse as well, when some artistic Kashchey the Immortal has consumed the lives of others and, by shielding a young plant from the sun, has condemned it to destruction, thus crippling the advance of the human spirit.

It's no problem that worker-peasant power occasioned significant support for the artist-innovators: they had been mercilessly repudiated by the older generation. Not to mention the fact that the Futurists were the first to come to the aid of the Revolution, and were, among all intellectuals, the most kindred and responsive to it. In fact, they proved in many respects to be good organizers, and I expect most positive results from the free artistic ateliers and the numerous regional and provincial schools which they have organized according to a broad plan.

But it would be a problem if the artist-innovators ultimately formed a state school of art, and made themselves official operatives of an art which, although revolutionary, would be dictated from above.

Thus, there are two traits which are somewhat frightening in the young countenance of this newspaper in whose columns my present letter is appearing: its destructive inclinations with respect to the past and its tendency, while speaking in the voice of a particular school, to simultaneously speak in the voice of official power.

However, I would hope that these persons who have been alarmed by the newspaper would not credit all of this with exceptional significance. It is of no small import that the militant Futurist Pougny, on the backporch of the very same journal whose portals are adorned with Mayakovsky's rapturous sculptures, toils with all his might to save the traditions of Mstera icon painting, expressing anxiety over the local authorities' prohibition against exporting icons from Mstera.

I can assure each and every one of you that the really talented among the innovators are perfectly aware of and even acknowledge the fact that antiquity contains much that is wondrous and fascinating; like the Augers they smile and wink at one another while they arrogantly defame everything old, knowing full well that this is only a youthful pose and, unfortunately, expressing how well they feel it suits them.

Lawton, pp. 253-255. See Permissions page.

### 3 THE YEAR 1919

#### STEPANOVA ON NON-OBJECTIVE ARTISTIC CREATIVITY

January, 1919

*Most of the leading figures of the abstract or non-representational art which flowered in Russia after the turn of the century saw the Russian Revolution as opening up new creative and cultural vistas, although they often disagreed on just what those were. Most believed, however, that their art was revolutionary and hence fit with the revolutionary epoch; many, like Varvara Stepanova, argued that it had major importance for "all aspects" of life and the shaping of the new society. The concept of the social role of art—if in different form—has remained a central feature of Soviet art. This statement is from the catalogue of the "Tenth State Exhibition" in Moscow, a show of two hundred and twenty works of the avant-garde which fixed the temporary dominance of non-objective art in revolutionary Russia. The art of this era has come to be recognized as of major importance in world as well as Russian art.*

#### Varvara Stepanova *Non-Objective Creativity*

The phase which followed Cubo-Futurism in the movement of art throughout the world began with non-objective art, a phenomenon which should be regarded not merely as a trend in painting, but as a new world view encompassing every aspect of art and life. This movement was a protest of the spirit against the materialism of modern life, and painters were among the first to perceive it. Incidentally, I should point out that painting is beginning to occupy an increasingly large place in world culture, despite all the "prayers for the dying" which the "born critics" are intoning over it.

The first slogans of non-objective creativity were proclaimed in 1913. From its very inception non-objective creativity has advanced by way of analysis and, being a young movement, has not as yet demonstrated its synthesis. This is why it is of value in this present time of terrible crisis, when art has lost its old traditions and is on the verge of falling into academicism for the sake of creating a new synthesis. It is not synthesis that reveals new paths, however, but analysis and invention.

In tracing the process of non-objective art in painting, we find two factors, one spiritual (the battle against the object and "representation" in the cause of free creativity and proclaimed acts of creation and inventiveness), the other concerned with expanding the professional demands of painting. Once the literary subject matter was lost, non-objective painters were obliged to improve the quality of execution, something which their predecessors were frequently saved from doing by the subject matter of the painting. Great, I would even say scientific, professional demands began to be made of the painter, in matters of facture, craftsmanship and technique, matters which in non-objective art place the painting high on the pedestal of painterly culture.

For now, the non-objective painters are united within a caste which their painterly principles have purged of dilettantes and the semi-educated.

Of course, the average "cultured" viewer whose comprehension of new achievements is slow in evolving, finds it difficult to keep up with the changes made by the non-objectivists as they advance along the revolutionary path of new discoveries, leaving in their wake the last stages of Futurism and Cubism. But if we accept "continuity" as an axiom, then non-objective creativity is the logical and legitimate outcome of the preceding stages in the

creation of painting. However, that same viewer, not being corrupted by subject matter in a painting and not being so "cultured" that he demands representation everywhere and always in art, should understand this creativity with his feelings and his unspoiled intuition as a new beauty, a beauty of disruption, a beauty born of painting's liberation from centuries of accursed subject matter and the depiction of what is visible.

In non-objective creativity, you won't find anything "familiar" or "comprehensible," but don't let this exasperate you, come to love art, grow to understand the tenet "to live for art," don't just study it and learn to discriminate, to look for subject matter that you understand, the representation of themes you may wish for.

As yet non-objective creativity is just the dawning of a great new epoch, of a time of great creativity hitherto unseen, destined to open the doors to mysteries more profound than science and technology.

It should be noted in passing that non-objective creativity has not created its own doctrinaire system and perhaps, in contrast to its predecessors, never will. It contains a thousand possibilities and great freedom for newer and newer achievements.

Lavrentiev, *Stepanova*, p. 169.



## INSTRUCTIONS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE TO PARTY CELLS OF RED ARMY UNITS OF THE FRONT AND REAR

January 5, 1919

*The functions of Communist Party members in the army, their organization, role, and relationship to both the commanders and to various party organs, were among the ongoing debates associated with the formation of the Red Army and the elaboration of party organization under the new governing conditions. Finally the Central Committee approved the following "Instructions" regulating party life and organization in the army. This was the fundamental document on this subject for the Civil War era. It focused mainly upon party membership, the party cell, and relationships among the duties of party members. It also restricted internal party democracy in army units.*

## INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (b) CENTRAL COMMITTEE TO FRONT AND REAR RED ARMY UNIT CELLS

### I. Cell Organization

1. All members of a Russian Communist Party Red Army unit (regiment, division, etc.) constitute a unit party cell.

2. For organization of a party cell, the unit commissar or one of the Russian Communist Party members, with the commissar's permission, announces the convening of an organizational meeting for the formation of a Russian Communist Party cell, to which all party members who are in the unit and who have some kind of party documents are invited.

3. The first meeting elects a three member commission for the verification of submitted party documents, which the regiment commissar must join if there is one, and which will give a report at the following meeting.

4. The second meeting must take place no later than seven days after the first. Comrades who, according to the report of the commission, have indisputable documents, are confirmed by the general meeting of members of the cell.



5. If the number of members at the second meeting does not exceed fifteen, a permanent secretary is elected to conduct cell business.

6. If there are more than fifteen, a presidium of three members is elected to conduct business; if there are more than one hundred, then five members are chosen.

7. The presidium and the secretary are subject to reelection by decision of the general assembly or by demand of one third of the cell.

8. If there are no confirmed party members in a given unit, the party cell can be made up of candidates for party membership chosen by the commissar or an authorized party organizer.

## II. The Rights and Obligations of Party Cells

9. The cell is required to put into practice all decrees of responsible party organizations and institutions.

10. To develop clear and sound communist consciousness among its Red Army members, by way of propaganda and agitation.

11. To conduct among the surrounding masses cultural-instructional work; for this purpose cells must either join cultural-instructional commissions existing in the unit or they themselves must create the same by order of a higher party cell or political department.

12. To fight mercilessly against the violation of party discipline in their own midst.

13. To assist the commissar and the commander with all their energy in the struggle against the destruction of Red Army discipline and themselves provide an example of observance of such.

14. To be an example of selfless bravery and steadfastness in battle, of patience and endurance through all difficulties and deprivations under conditions of war. To volunteer for the most dangerous missions when volunteers are called on for a dangerous undertaking—intelligence in the rear of the enemy, putting together shock groups, etc.

15. To bring all disorders and abuses in the unit to the attention of the commissar. Toward this goal the party cell must strive to have its members on inspection-management commissions, where they are created.

16. The cell must constantly work to develop a close relationship between Red Army soldiers, and local workers and the poorest part of the population, and to eliminate any misunderstanding between them.

17. All work of the party cell in each Red Army unit must contribute to the task of creating in the unit a strong nucleus of communists and sympathizers who will have a deep understanding of the great significance of victory at the front for the socialist fatherland, who are capable at the necessary of providing an example of readiness to sacrifice their lives for the sake of victory, and who will attract the less politically conscious Red Army comrades and resist everywhere disquieting rumours and panic.

18. For successful party propaganda a cell is obligated to: a) handle distribution of newspapers and literature on political and military questions, b) arrange general readings and discussion, c) if possible, organize studies for political literacy, etc.

19. Party cells do not interfere with the activity and orders of the command staff.

## III. General Meetings

20. All cell members gather together weekly for regular general meetings on a day set specifically by decision of the commissar.

21. In case of need a special meeting is convened by the same procedure.

22. In circumstances of military activity general meetings can be cancelled at the commissar's discretion.

23. No party member, regardless of his position in [military] service, exercises any special authority at party meetings.

24. The protocol of the general meeting lists all members present. Absence from three consecutive meetings without a legitimate excuse is grounds for expulsion from the cell.

25. A cell meeting is considered legal with the presence of one third of all members; if a meeting does not take place because of failure of enough members to appear, it is postponed until the next time, which is considered legal with any number of assembled members.

26. All decisions of the general meeting are recorded in the protocol, which is signed by the chairman and the secretary.

27. All decisions of the general assembly which have any relationship to life at the front will go into effect after confirmation by the unit commissar.

28. The execution of assignments is entrusted to the secretary or presidium of the cell.

#### IV. The Cell's Connection with Central Institutions

29. The cell presidium is the regiment party center.

30. Divisional party bureaus composed of representatives from party regimental and other cells can be created by decision of army political departments.

31. Army and front political departments may assemble division and army conferences for discussion of questions connected with organization of political work in the army.

32. Conferences do not choose any executive organs (bureaus, etc.)

33. Party cells are connected to party centers through political departments at the front and local Russian Communist Party committees in the rear.

#### V. The Relationship of Regiment Cells to the Commissars and Commanding Staff

34. The regiment cell has a leader of party activity at the front in the person of a commissar commissioned by a higher party institution. In case of a difference of opinion between the commissar and the party cell, the latter has the right to appeal to a higher party authority.

35. A meeting convened by the cell for complaint against a commissar's action can not be forbidden or revoked by him, but may be, only for conditions of military activity, postponed for no more than seven days.

36. The commissar has no right to hinder the dispatch of a delegate from party cells to a political department with a report about the situation or a complaint against his action.

37. The party cell has the obligation to support and strengthen by all means confidence in the commissar as a political leader and in the commander and as a military leader.

38. In an instance of treason on the part of a commander, the party cell assists the commissar in subordinating all units to him and in liquidation of the treason.

#### VI. Admittance and Expulsion of Members

39. All party cells acting on the basis of the present Instructions have the right to accept candidates for cell membership on the basis of party regulations, that is by recommendation of two cell members. At the front candidates are confirmed as active members by the political department of the army or division bureau where they are organized (see point 30). Comrades who recommend a candidate have full responsibility for him.

40. Comrades who are already members of the Russian Communist Party are confirmed as cell members by simple registration.

41. All applications of those wishing to enter the cell are examined by the next general meeting; if the applications are accepted, they are confirmed as candidates. Candidates submit to party discipline and carry out all party obligations. One month after the day of enrollment candidates are recommended by decision of the general meeting to the army political committee for confirmation as actual members.

42. Members of a regiment cell are subject to permanent or temporary expulsion for violation of party rules and the present Instructions, especially for drunkenness, cowardice and other shameful acts.

43. Expulsion of members from the cell can be carried out:

a) by decision of higher and local party institutions;

b) at the front by decision of an army or front political department, based on a statement of the cell general meeting or the commissar.

44. Discussion at a general meeting about admittance of party candidates and expulsion of party members must be recorded in detail in the minutes, and these minutes are to be opportunely dispatched on command.

#### VII. Resources and Bookkeeping

45. All cell members and candidates pay membership dues of one percent of their salary, according to Party Regulations.

46. All dues are recorded in party books and in other documents which are used for observance of accurate recordkeeping and bookkeeping.

47. All sums (dues and other receipts) are kept by one of the presidium members, who is considered the treasurer, or by the secretary; and they are spent according to transactions signed by one of the presidium members.

48. Half of all deposits are sent to the party Central Committee through political departments at the front. The remaining half is used for cell needs.

49. The treasurer or secretary is obligated to present a monthly accounting of fund activity to the general meeting.

50. In case of cell liquidation, the final accounting and all sums are presented to the appropriate political department, or at the rear to the local party committee.

#### VIII. Presidium Obligations

51. The following obligations lie with the presidium: a) registration of members, b) establishing the agenda for general meetings, c) maintaining and the content of protocols of general meetings, d) execution of general meeting decisions, e) management of accounts-receivable, payable and savings, f) supervision of cell activity so that it corresponds to all the demands of these instructions (the presidium is the most responsible for infringements), g) writing up of weekly announcements and correspondence about the life of cells of all units for newspapers and political departments. Execution of this [last] item is especially important.

#### IX. The Seal

52. Front and rear party cells do not have their own special seal but use the seals of their respective commissars.

The Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party

*Partino-politicheskaia rabota v Krasnoi armii i flote. Dokumenty*, Vol. 1, pp. 50-55.



### FORCED LABOR BY THE BOURGEOISIE AND DAILY LIFE IN MOSCOW

January 5-9, 1919

*The diary of Iu. V. Got'e is an excellent record of life in Moscow through the eyes of the professional strata of society. He was of an old Moscow professional family (of French origins) and at this time a professor of history at Moscow University and Associate Director of the Rumiantsev Museum. He kept a diary of daily events from 1917 to 1922, when he had it smuggled out of Russia. In these entries he refers to him and his wife having to do public labor, which was required of "the bourgeoisie" (see October 31, 1918, above), as well as about other matters of daily life at the time.*

5 [January]. I felt fatigued all day from yesterday's outing to Maiden Field and Miusskaia Square. These outings are also contemporary phenomena: they add their characteristic touch to the general picture of Russian life. My wife is being ordered to shovel snow tomorrow—that is yet another touch of contemporary life. We are surrounded by such "touches"; we

can't escape from them. Odessa has been occupied by the Volunteer Army and the Allies. The tricolored flag has been raised there in the name of a united and indivisible Russia. At last! The Menshevik newspaper *Evening Moscow* reports this; it of course does not approve of it.

6 [January]. This morning I hauled sauerkraut down the streets of Moscow in the company of A. I. Iakovlev, just as much a university professor as I, and O. M. Veselkina, the directress of the Aleksandrovskii Institute [girls school]—more correctly the former institute—and then I scraped snow from the street. Then I had the visit of Count P.S. Sheremetev concerning the rescue of the Mikhailovskoe Library, so that a touching unanimity of official and unofficial spheres on this matter has been revealed. I have never been so pleased with the Christmas tree as this year and rejoice that we will light it upon returning from vespers.

8 [January]. Two quiet days, during which the Bolsheviks have allowed us to rest; I tried to rest on those days, but hardly achieved any result; at least right now, on the evening of the second of those days, I feel just as exhausted as earlier. Today we took Volodia [his son] to the circus and watched how he enjoyed himself; but we could not enjoy ourselves. Nowhere, perhaps, is the ochlocracy that rules over us so obvious as at the circus: nothing but gorilla mugs [his contemptuous phrase for the Bolsheviks]. In the evening there was a long and hot argument with Nina [his wife] about what we are going to have to do and what should be enterprised for our rescue. It is my impression that so far we still don't understand each other. That is very sad, the more so in that I myself vacillate every day, not knowing what best to do. But I am progressively coming to the conclusion that no kind of activity is possible in Sovdepiia [Soviet Russia] and that, for Russia's sake and for my own sake, I should leave here.

9 [January]. The specter of hunger is looming ever nearer and tighter. I took a stroll around Moscow today and was somehow especially horror-struck by this dead and murdered city; one thought—to flee, and more than ever before I have the firm view that [we] should prepare for departure.

Got'e, pp. 228-229.



### TROTSKY ON THE USE OF SPECIALISTS

January 10, 1919

*The question of the use of specialists, both civilian (plant managers, bureaucrats, scientists, etc.) and military (officers of the old army), was one of the most contentious and divisive issues confronting the Communist Party during the early years, and even up to the 1930s. Most party members were ambivalent, seeing the need for but distrusting them. Trotsky was one of the most vigorous proponents and fought a continual battle in favor of their use in the new Red Army. In this letter he puts the issue in its somewhat broader context. It was published February 23, 1919.*

Leon Trotsky  
*Scientifically or Somehow?*  
*A Letter to a Friend*

Dear Friend,

You ask how it can have happened that the question of specialists, such as the officers of the old General Staff, has assumed such great importance among us. Let me tell you that

what is at issue here is actually not the matter of military specialists—it is a question both broader and deeper than that.

We are the party of the working class. Together with its advanced elements we spent decades in underground conditions, carried on our struggle, fought on the barricades, overturned the old regime, cast aside all the in-between groups such as the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks and, at the head of the working class, took power into our hands. But though our party is deeply and unbreakably linked with the working class it has never been and cannot become a mere flatterer of the working class, expressing gratification with whatever the workers may be doing. We treated with contempt those who preached to us that the proletariat had taken power 'too soon,' as though a revolutionary class can take power when it likes and not when history forces it to take power. But at the same time we never said, and we do not say now, that our working class has attained full maturity and can cope 'as though it were child's play' with all tasks and resolve all difficulties. The proletariat and, all the more so, the peasant masses, have only recently emerged, after all, from many centuries of slavery and bear all the consequences of oppression, ignorance and darkness. The conquest of power, in itself, does not at all transform the working class and does not confer upon it all the attainments and qualities it needs: the conquest of power merely opens up for it the possibility of really studying and developing and ridding itself of its historical shortcomings.

By a tremendous effort the upper stratum of the Russian working class has accomplished a gigantic historical task. Even in this upper stratum, however, there is still too much half-knowledge and half-skill, too few workers who, by virtue of their knowledge, breadth of horizon and energy are capable of doing on behalf of their class what the representatives, hirelings and agents of the bourgeoisie did for the former ruling classes.

Lassalle once said that the German workers of his day—more than half a century ago—were poor in understanding of their own poverty. The revolutionary development of the proletariat consists also in the fact that it arrives at an understanding of its oppressed position, its poverty, and rises against the ruling classes. This gives it the possibility of seizing political power. But the taking of political power essentially reveals to the proletariat for the first time the full picture of its poverty in respect of general and specialised education and government experience. The understanding by the revolutionary class of its own inadequacies is the guarantee that these will be overcome.

It would undoubtedly be most dangerous for the working class if its leading circles were to suppose that with the conquest of power the main thing had been done, and were to allow their revolutionary conscience to go to sleep upon what has been achieved. The proletariat did not, indeed, carry through the revolution in order to make it possible for thousands or even tens of thousands of advanced workers to settle into jobs in the soviets and commissariats. Our revolution will fully justify itself only when every toiling man and woman feels that his or her life has become easier, freer, cleaner and more dignified. This has not yet been achieved. A hard road still lies between us and this, our essential and only goal.

In order that the life of the working millions may become easier, more abundant and richer in content, it is necessary to increase in every sphere the organisation and efficiency of work and to attain an incomparably higher level of knowledge, a wider horizon for all those called to be representatives of the working class in all fields of their activity. While working it is necessary to learn. It is necessary to learn from everyone from whom anything can be learnt. It is necessary to attract and draw in all forces that can be harnessed to work. Once more—it is necessary to remember that the masses of the people will evaluate the revolution, in the last analysis, by its practical results. And they will be quite right in so doing. Yet there can be no doubt that a section of Soviet officials have adopted the attitude that the task of the working class had been fundamentally fulfilled by the mere calling to power of workers' and peasants' deputies who cope 'somehow' with their work. The Soviet regime is the best regime for the workers' revolution just because it most truly reflects the development of the

proletariat, its struggle, its successes, but also its inadequacies, including those of its leading stratum. Along with the many thousands of first-class people whom the proletariat has advanced from its ranks, people who learn and make progress, and who undoubtedly have a great future before them, there are also in the leading Soviet organs not a few half-equipped people who imagine themselves to be know-alls. Complacency, resting content with small successes—this is the worst feature of philistinism, which is radically inimical to the historical tasks of the proletariat. Nevertheless, this feature is also to be encountered among those workers who, with more or less justification, can be called advanced: the heritage of the past, petty-bourgeois traditions and influences and finally, just the demand of strained nerves for rest, all do their work. In addition, there are fairly numerous representatives of the intelligentsia and semi-intelligentsia who have sincerely rallied to the cause of the working class but have not yet had a thorough internal burn-out and so have retained many qualities and ways of thought which are characteristic of the petty-bourgeois milieu. These, the worst elements of the new regime, are striving to become crystallized as a Soviet bureaucracy.

I said 'the worst' without forgetting the many thousands of technicians merely lacking in political ideas who are employed by all Soviet institutions. Technicians, 'non-party' specialists, carry out their tasks, well or badly, without accepting responsibility for the Soviet regime and without charging our party with responsibility for themselves. It is necessary to make use of them in every possible way, without demanding from them what they cannot give... Our own bureaucrat, however, is real historical ballast—already conservative, sluggish, complacent, unwilling to learn and even expressing enmity to anybody who reminds him of the need to learn.

This is the genuine menace to the cause of communist revolution. These are the genuine accomplices of counter-revolution, even though they are not guilty of any conspiracy. Our factories work not better than those belonging to the bourgeoisie, but worse. The fact, therefore, that a number of workers stand at their head, as managers, does not in itself solve any problems. If these workers are filled with resolve to achieve great results (and in the majority of cases this is so or will become so), then all difficulties will be overcome. It is necessary to move, from all directions, towards a more rational, more improved organisation of the economy and command of the army. It is necessary to arouse initiative, criticism, creative power. It is necessary to give more scope to the great mainspring of emulation. At the same time, it is necessary to draw in specialists, to find experienced organisers, first-class technicians, to give opportunities to all talents, both those that emerge from the depths and those that remain as a legacy from the bourgeois regime. Only a wretched Soviet bureaucrat, jealous for his new job, and cherishing this job because of the personal privileges it confers and not because of the interests of the workers' revolution, can have an attitude of baseless distrust towards any great expert, outstanding organiser, technician, specialist or scientist—having already decided on his own account that 'me and my mates will get by somehow.'

In our General Staff Academy there are some party comrades now studying who have in practice, in bloody experience, conscientiously understood how hard is the stern art of war and who are now working with the greatest attention under the guidance of professors of the old military school. People who are close to the Academy tell me that the attitude of the pupils to their teachers is not at all determined by political factors, and apparently it is the most conservative of the teachers who is honoured with the most notable marks of attention. These people want to learn. They see beside them others who possess knowledge, and they do not sniff, do not swagger, do not shout, 'tossing their Soviet caps in the air'—they learn diligently and conscientiously from the 'Tsarist generals,' because these generals know what the Communists do not know and what the Communists need to know. And I have no doubt that, when they have learnt, our Red military academicians will make substantial corrections to what they are now learning, and perhaps will even make some fresh contributions of their own.

Insufficient knowledge is, of course, not a fault but a misfortune, and moreover a misfortune which can be put right. But this misfortune becomes a fault and even a crime when it is supplemented by complacency, reliance on 'maybe' and 'most likely,' and an attitude of envy and hatred towards anybody who knows more than oneself.

You asked why this question of the military specialists has aroused such passion. The essence of the matter is that behind this question, if we dig far enough, two trends are hidden: one, which proceeds from an appreciation of the magnitude of the tasks confronting us, endeavours to utilise all the forces and resources which the proletariat has inherited from capitalism—to rationalise, i.e., to comprehend in practice, all social work, including military work, introducing in every sphere the principle of economy of forces, achieving the greatest possible results with the minimum of sacrifices—really to create conditions under which it will be easier to live. The other trend, which fortunately is much less strong, is nourished by the moods of limited, envious, complacent (and yet at the same time unsure of itself) philistine-bureaucratic conservatism... 'We're managing somehow, aren't we, so we'll keep on managing all right.' It isn't true! We shall not manage 'somehow,' in any case: either we shall manage completely, as we ought, in accordance with science, applying and developing all the powers and resources of technique, or we shall not manage at all, but collapse in ruin. Who has not understood this has not understood anything.

Returning to the question you raise, old friend, about the military specialists, let me tell you this, from my own direct observation. There are certain corners in our armed forces where 'distrust' of the military specialists is particularly flourishing. What corners are these? The most cultured, the richest in political knowledge of the masses? Not a bit! On the contrary, these are the most deprived corners of our Soviet republic. In one of our armies it was considered not long ago a mark of the highest revolutionariness to jeer rather pettily and stupidly at 'military specialists,' i.e. at all who had studied in military schools. Yet in this very same army practically no political work was carried on. The attitude there was no less hostile, perhaps even more so, towards Communist commissars, those political 'specialists,' than it was towards the military specialists. Who was sowing this hostility? The worst sort among the new commanders—military half-experts, half-guerrillas, half-party people who did not want to have anyone around them, be they party workers or serious military workers. These are the worst sort of commanders. They are ignorant but they do not want to learn. Their failures—how could they have successes?—they always seek to explain by somebody else's treachery. They quail miserably before any change in the morale of their units, for they lack any serious moral and military authority. When a unit, not feeling the hand of a firm leader, refuses to attack, they hide behind its back. Hanging on for dear life to their jobs, they hate the mere mention of military studies. For them these are identified with treachery and perfidy. Many of them, after getting finally into a hopeless mess, have ended up by simply rebelling against the Soviet power.

In those units where the level of the Red Army men's morale is higher, where political work is carried on, where there are responsible commissars and party cells, they have no fear of the military specialists; on the contrary, they ask for them, use them and learn from them. Moreover, in those units they catch the real traitors much more successfully, and shoot them in good time. And, what is most important of all, those units win victories.

That is how it is, dear friend. Now, perhaps, you can better grasp the root of the differences that exist on the question of military and other specialists.

*En route, Tambov-Balashov  
January 10, 1919*

Trotsky, *How the Revolution Armed*, Vol. 2, pp. 220-226.

## RESTRICTION OF WORKERS' CONTROL

January 23, 1919

*Workers' control had been a powerful movement in 1917 and the new government had endorsed it (see above, November 14, 1917). However, Lenin and most Bolshevik leaders strongly favored centralized direction of the economy and began as soon as possible to restrict workers' control and the factory committees. A number of measures throughout 1918 whittled away at both. One method was to emphasize the role of the trade unions while undermining the more independent factory committees. This resolution (document I) adopted at the Second All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions marks the decline of an independent workers' control movement, while providing both an explanation of the changing role of workers' organizations and provisions for the work of "control commissions" within the factory. Although the resolution reflected the direction of party policy, a resolution opposing it (document II) introduced by the faction of Social Democrats (Internationalists) both provides a critique of the policy and foreshadows the bitter debates which were to erupt within the Communist Party soon afterwards over the role of the workers in the "workers' state."*

## I

[Resolution Adopted at the Second All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions]

The Second All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions, having heard the report on workers' control, resolves as follows:

1. Workers' control, which has served as a powerful revolutionary weapon in the hands of the workers' organizations in their struggle against the disruption of industry, against the sabotage practiced by employers, and in their fight for the economic supremacy of the proletariat, has led the working class to direct participation in the organization of production.

2. The economic dictatorship of the working class has created new conditions for the initiative of the wide masses of the workers. Through their trade-union associations the workers have been called upon to organize the national economy of the country and to participate in the management of production.

3. At the same time, the supremacy of the working class over the economic life of the country has not as yet reached its culmination point. A latent struggle is still going on within the new economic forms, which makes it necessary for the working masses to control the activities of the institutions charged with the management of production.

4. Under the conditions of transition from the capitalist to the socialist regime, workers' control must be transformed from a revolutionary weapon used in the struggle for the economic dictatorship of the proletariat into a practical institution aiding in the consolidation of this dictatorship in the field of industrial production.

5. Workers' control must be confined to supervising the work carried on by various enterprises and inspecting the activities of plant administrations as well as the administrations of entire branches of production. However, workers' control must not precede executive management, but rather follow it.

6. Workers' control is also charged with the task of training the masses of the working class in the skills of production organization and management.

With these objectives in view, the Congress resolves:

1) To confirm the resolution of the First All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions regarding the formation of organs of control, both locally and in the center, under the guidance of the workers' industrial trade unions.

2) Within every nationalized industrial, commercial, or transport enterprise the local control commission assumes the task of supervising the work of the enterprise and the activities of its management. For this purpose it gathers and systematizes all data relating to the operations of the enterprise and places the same at the disposal of the Control



Department of its industrial union, before which it may also raise the question of inspecting the work whenever this is deemed necessary.

Note: In exceptional cases the local control commission has the right on its own responsibility to set the time for an inspection of an enterprise provided it immediately notified the Control Department of the corresponding industrial union of the nature of such an inspection.

3) The local control commission is to be composed of: (a) representatives of the corresponding industrial trade unions; (b) persons elected by the general meeting of the workers employed in a given factory, their election to be confirmed by a committee of the corresponding industrial trade union. However, members of the local control commission appointed by the industrial union shall retain their office for a considerable length of time while members elected at the general meeting shall be replaced within short intervals of time. This is done with a view to training large masses of workers for the management and organization of industry and thereby ensuring a gradual transition to a system of universal participation in industrial management by all workers.

4) The local control commission is responsible for its activities both to the general meeting of the workers of the factory and to the Control Department of its industrial trade union. In case of abuse of authority and negligence of duties, the local control commission is subject to severe penalties.

5) Representatives of the local control commission are to participate in the meetings of the factory management in a consultative capacity only. Executive rights in the administration of an enterprise remain with the management, which bears full responsibility for the work of the establishment.

6) Coordination of workers' control within the limits of any given industry is within the jurisdiction of the appropriate industrial trade union. The union creates a Workers' Control Department which is responsible to the administrative body of that union.

7) Control over the activities of the various committees of workers' control is entrusted by the Congress to the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions, which is authorized to organize a higher organ of workers' control composed of representatives of the industrial trade unions.

8) With a view to coordinating all functions of control and of eliminating duplication, the organizations of the People's Commissariat of State Control must work in contact with the controlling organizations of the industrial trade unions.

9) The higher organ of workers' control is to work out regulations of control as well as the form of their organization. Pending the publication of such regulations, the workers' control organizations in the nationalized enterprises should be guided by the present decree.

10) The statute relating to workers' control in nationalized enterprises is to be promulgated in the form of a decree of the Soviet of People's Commissars.

11) In non-nationalized enterprises, workers' control is to be carried out in accordance with the decree of November 27, 1917.

## II

### [Resolution Introduced by the Social Democrats (Internationalists) but Defeated]

I. Prior to the November Revolution, workers' control was a battle cry of the revolutionary proletariat striving to change the correlation of forces existing between labor and capital in the production relationships of the capitalist world.

II. The November Revolution, which dealt the first blow to the economic dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, has made it possible for the proletariat to apply control over production in practice.

III. In the course of the first few months after the November Revolution, anarcho-syndicalist tendencies became apparent in the practice of workers' control. At the same time the pulverization and decentralization of control has found its most ardent supporters among the members of the Communist Party, a fact which found its expression in the decree on workers' control issued November 27, 1917.

IV. The First Congress of Trade Unions summed up the period of amateurish work [in this field], formulated a clear theoretical basis for workers' control, and outlined an accurate and practical policy for the establishment of the organizations of workers' control.

V. The year that has elapsed since the First Congress of Trade Unions has supplied us with a good deal of experience which must be taken into account by the present Congress in determining the future development of workers' control. That experience has shown us the following:

- 1) That the local commissions of control were unequal to the task of solving complicated problems of a national-economic nature.

- 2) That the commissions of control considered mainly the interests of their own enterprises, often ignoring the interests of the country as a whole.

- 3) That the constitution, the scope, the character, and the methods of work of control commissions differed not only in various branches of industries, but also in enterprises belonging to the same branch of production.

- 4) That the economic institutions of the Soviet Government have disorganized the entire work of control in that they tried to remove workers' control from the jurisdiction of the trade unions and to concentrate it in the Councils of National Economy.

- 5) That the trade unions failed to defend their rights of preserving their own control machinery, which slipped out of their hands, with the result that workers' control disappeared in certain branches of labor under the pretext that it was not needed in Soviet government institutions and in nationalized enterprises.

VI. Simultaneously with the withering away of workers' control by trade unions, a process of formation of technical control departments attached to the *Glavki* and *Tsentry* took place. The organization of these departments proceeded without system or plan and without any contact with the economic organizations of the proletariat, with the result that they turned into purely bureaucratic institutions.

VII. Paralleling the commissions of control attached to the trade unions and the technical control departments of the *Glavki* and *Tsentry*, the institution of State Control has been resurrected, with its old prerevolutionary personnel, its old apparatus, and old methods of work. In this way there came into being, both in the center and locally, a number of entangled and cumbersome control organizations interfering with each other's work. Given the imprecision and lack of organization in the commissions of control attached to the trade unions, the initiative has passed to the technical control departments of the *Glavki* and *Tsentry*, and to the departments of State Control. These institutions are now advocating the complete subordination to them of all organs of workers' control.

VIII. The weakening of workers' control in the provinces also can be explained by the fact that during the past year the entire work of regulation and organization of industry has been concentrated exclusively in the Supreme Council of National Economy—the *Glavki*, *Tsentry*, and the Main Administrations of the nationalized industries.

IX. The trade unions, both in the center and in the provinces, failed to profit significantly from past years' experience, positive and negative, of the control commissions and were found wanting in adapting the control machinery which has arisen spontaneously to the changed conditions of industrial organization and goods exchange.

X. The theory that workers' control has become obsolete is indicative of the effort to create an armored screen protecting Soviet industry and the entire Soviet bureaucratic machinery from the control of the workers' economic organizations. The trade unions cannot and must not allow such independence to be enjoyed by the Soviet regime.

XI. Workers' control should not only be retained, but should be expanded. It should go beyond the limits of control over production and extend its influence over all areas of the social and economic life of the country. The entire Soviet machinery which has been created by the November Revolution, and which to a great extent has become alienated from the workers, must be placed under their control.

XII. In view of the adoption of a policy of economic centralization and of trustification of entire branches of industry, the nature and the methods of work of control commissions must be changed. Workers' control should be exercised from the centers, while locally and in individual enterprises the control commissions should merely assume the functions of inspection and survey and should not interfere in the technical and managerial functions of the enterprise. Only in extreme and exceptional cases can the control commissions veto the orders of the plant management.

XIII. All technical control departments should be separated from the *Glavki* and *Tsentry* and transferred to the corresponding industrial trade unions which, together with the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions, will form an All-Russian Council of Workers' Control having the same number of departments as there are industrial unions.

XIV. In addition to workers' control over production, transportation, and distribution, there should be organized departments of inspection and control operating in state and public institutions, especially in financial and credit institutions which so far have not been served by the above-mentioned control departments.

XV. The work of control and inspection by trade unions over all food organizations is to be organized jointly with the workers' cooperatives.

[The resolution contains another five paragraphs, which pertain to the re-establishment of the All-Russian Council of Workers' Control and its relations with local councils.]

Bunyan, *Forced Labor*, pp. 29-35.



## INVITATION TO THE FIRST CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL (COMINTERN)

January 24, 1919

*On January 24, 1919 the Russian Communist leaders broadcast by radio an invitation to attend a world congress to found a new, third, international. It was indicative of the confusion of the time and the uncertainty of the Soviet leaders that neither a date nor place was mentioned. Lenin had long desired the formation of a new socialist international, feeling that the old one had been irreparably compromised during the war. Fear that efforts in Western Europe to revive the Second International might be successful apparently was the major reason for the haste in calling this congress. The fading of hopes for better relations with the Allied governments (which the Comintern could only antagonize) contributed to this decision also, as did the founding of a German Communist Party, which Lenin had considered a pre-requisite for anything which could be termed an international Communist organization. Although there was no chance in the conditions of the times that a representative congress could convene, the invitation was issued over the signature of nine men for eight "parties." Of these, only Lenin and Trotsky for the Russians had any formal authorization or represented a real party. Trotsky drafted the invitation.*

COMRADES: The undersigned parties and organizations consider it indispensable to call the first congress of the new Revolutionary International. During the war and the revolution it has become clear not only that the old socialistic and social-democratic parties have gone bankrupt, and the Second International with them, and that the elements included among

the old Social-Democracy (the so-called "Center") were incapable of active revolutionary activity, but also that already now the framework is ready for the real revolutionary international. The gigantic pace of the world revolution which gives rise to new problems, the danger that this revolution may be killed by the alliance of the capitalistic states, which organize a "League of Nations" against the revolution, the attempt of the "traitor-socialists" to gather, and after having "amnestied" each other, to assist their governments and the bourgeoisie again to betray the working class, and finally in view of revolutionary experience and for the purpose of internationalizing the whole course of the revolution, we were induced to take the initiative in placing on the order of the day the question of calling the revolutionary proletarian parties to an international congress.

#### AIM AND TACTIC

According to our opinion, the new International must be based on the recognition of the following principles, which we present as the platform and which have been worked out in accordance with the programs of the "Spartacus Association" in Germany and the Communist (Bolshevik) Party in Russia:

1. The present is the period of destruction and crushing of the capitalistic system of the whole world, and it will be a catastrophe for the whole European culture, should capitalism with all its insoluble contradictions not be done away with.

2. The aim of the proletariat must now be immediately to conquer power. To conquer power means to destroy the governmental apparatus of the bourgeoisie and to organize a new proletarian governmental apparatus.

3. The new apparatus of the Government must express the dictatorship of the working class (and in certain places even the dictatorship of the half-proletariat in the villages, that is the peasant proletariat), that is, to persist in the systematic suppression of the exploiting classes and be the means of expropriating them. No false bourgeois democracy—this treacherous form of the power of a financial oligarchy, with its mere external equality—but a proletarian democracy able to realize the freedom of the working masses, no parliamentarism, but the self-government of the masses through their elected organs; no capitalistic bureaucracy, but governing organs which have been appointed by the masses themselves, through the real participation of these masses in the governing of the country and the socialistic work of reorganization—such ought to be the type of the proletarian state. Soviet power or a corresponding organization of governments is its concrete expression.

4. The dictatorship of the proletariat must be the occasion for the immediate expropriation of capital and the elimination of the private right of owning the means of production, through making them common public property. The socialization (meaning doing away with private property and making it the property of the proletarian state, which is managed by the workers on a socialistic basis) of the large-scale industries and the central bodies organized by the same, including the banks, the confiscation of the capitalistic agricultural production, the monopolization of large-scale commerce; the socialization of the large buildings in the towns and in the country; the establishment of a workers' government and the concentration of the economic functions in the hands of the organs of the proletarian dictatorship—these are the most essential aims of the day.

5. In order to protect the socialist revolution against external and internal enemies, and to assist the fighting proletariats of other countries, it becomes necessary to entirely disarm the bourgeoisie and its agents and to arm the proletariat.

6. The world situation demands immediate and as perfect as possible relations between the different groups of the revolutionary proletariat and a complete alliance of all the countries in which the revolution has already succeeded.

7. The most important method is the mass action of the proletariat, including armed struggle against the Government power of capitalists.

### ATTITUDE TOWARD SOCIALIST PARTIES

8. The old International has been divided in three main groups: the outright Socialist-Chauvinists, who, during the whole imperialistic war, 1914-1918, supported the bourgeoisie and undertook the role of executioners of the laborers' revolution; the "Center," the theoretical leader of which is Kautsky, and which within itself contains mostly wavering elements, who are unable to follow any decided lines, but sometimes are clearly traitorous to the International; and finally the Left Revolutionary Wing.

9. Toward the Socialist-Chauvinists, who everywhere and especially on the most critical occasions appear with arms in their hands against the proletarian revolution, we can only advocate a struggle without quarter, and toward the "Center" such a tactic as would separate the most revolutionary elements from the rest by criticizing and exposing the leaders. It is absolutely necessary to see to it that the labor organizations at a certain stage of development are kept from being controlled by the "Center."

10. It is necessary to organize the revolutionary elements among the workers who have not as yet joined the socialistic parties, but completely stand on the side of the proletarian dictatorship in the form which it has assumed in the Soviet system. Such are first of all the syndicalist elements of the workers.

11. Finally it is necessary to include all proletarian groups or organizations which, if they have not openly joined the Left Revolutionary movement show, however, tendencies in that direction.

12. We propose that in the Congress should participate representatives of the following parties, groups and movements (which have the right to full membership in the Third International):

(1) Spartacus League of Germany; (2) The Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Russia; (3) Communist Party in German Austria; (4) The Communist Party of Hungary; (5) The Communist Party of Poland; (6) The Communist Party of Finland; (7) The Communist Party of Esthonia; (8) The Communist Party of Lettland; (9) The Communist Party of Lithuania; (10) The Communist Party of White-Russia; (11) The Communist Party of the Ukraine; (12) The revolutionary elements within the Czech Social-Democracy; (13) The Social-Democratic Party of Bulgaria; (14) The Social-Democratic Party of Roumania; (15) The Left Wing of the Socialist Party of Serbia; (16) The Social-Democratic Left Party of Sweden; (17) The Social-Democratic Party of Norway; (18) The Socialist Workers' Party of Denmark; (19) The Communist Party of the Netherlands; (20) The revolutionary elements within the Workers' Party of Belgium; (21 and 22) Groups and organizations within the socialist and syndicalist movements of France, mainly solidary with Lorient; (23) Left Social-Democrats of Switzerland; (24) Socialist Party of Italy; (25) The left elements within the Socialist Party of Spain; (26) The left elements of the Socialist Party of Portugal; (27) The Socialist Party of Great Britain (especially adherents of MacLean's groups); (28) The Socialist Labor Party (S.L.P.) of England; (29) I.W.W. (Industrial Workers of the World) of England; (30) I.W. of Great Britain; (31) The revolutionary elements of "shop steward" movements of England; (32) The revolutionary elements of the labor organizations of Ireland; (33) Socialist Labor Party of America (S.L.P.); (34) The left elements of the Socialist Party of America (S.P.) (especially that group which is represented by Debs and the socialist propaganda association); (35) I.W.W. of America; (36) I.W.W. of Australia; (37) Workers International Industrial Union (W.I.I.U.) of America; (38) Socialistic groups in Tokio and Yokohama (represented by Katayama); (39) Socialistic International Youth.

### THE QUESTION OF ORGANIZATION AND THE NAME OF THE PARTY

13. The Third International's basis has been worked out so that in different parts of Europe groups and organizations of similarly thinking people have been formed which join the same program and practically follow the same tactics. This first of all applies to the Spartacans in Germany and the Communist parties in many other countries.

14. The Congress must lay the foundation of a common fighting organ, which will provide permanent liaison and systematic direction for the movement, a center for the Communist International, which subordinates the interests of the movement in every separate country to the common interests of the Revolution on an international scale. The concrete forms for the organizations, the representation, etc., are to be worked out at the Congress.

15. The Congress shall be called "The First Communist International Congress" of which the different parties will form the sections. Marx and Engels even considered the name "Social-Democrats" theoretically wrong. The humiliating bankruptcy of the old "International" demands a new name. In addition, the nucleus of the great movement is already formed by many parties, which have already taken the name of Communist.

In view of the above we propose that all affiliated parties and organizations take up, on the order of the day, the subject of calling an International Communist Congress.

With fraternal greetings,

The Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Lenin, Trotsky).

The Foreign Bureau of Poland's Communist Workers' Party (Karski).

The Foreign Bureau of Hungary's Communist Party (Rudnianski).

The Foreign Bureau of the German-Austrian Communist Party (Duda)

The Russian Bureau for the Central Committee of the Lettish Communist Party (Rosin).

The Central Committee of the Finnish Communist Party (Sirola).

The Acting Committee for the Federation of the Revolutionary Balkan Social-Democrats (Rakovsky).

The Socialist Labor Party of America (Reinstein).

U.S. Department of State, *Memorandum on Certain Aspects of the Bolshevik Movement in Russia*, pp. 22-24, with minor modifications by the editor.



## MANIFESTO OF THE COMMUNIST-FUTURISTS (KOMFUT)

January 26, 1919

*The Communists-Futurists rejected the culture of the past and criticized the government's policy of preserving that heritage, calling instead for sweeping all of this away and building an entirely new art and culture. Many prominent members of the cultural intelligentsia were associated with the movement, directly or in spirit. This and similar movements were able to flourish, an expression of revolutionary exuberance in culture, for a few years after the revolution.*

### Program Declaration

A Communist regime demands a Communist consciousness. All forms of life, morality, philosophy, and art must be re-created according to Communist principles. Without this, the subsequent development of the Communist Revolution is impossible.

In their activities the cultural-educational organs of the Soviet government show a complete misunderstanding of the revolutionary task entrusted to them. The social-democratic ideology so hastily knocked together is incapable of resisting the century-old experience of the bourgeois ideologists, who, in their own interests, are exploiting the proletarian cultural-educational slogans.

Under the guise of immutable truths, the masses are being presented with the pseudo teachings of the gentry.

Under the guise of universal truth—the morality of the exploiters.

Under the guise of the eternal laws of beauty—the depraved taste of the oppressors.

It is essential to start creating our own Communist ideology.

It is essential to wage merciless war against all the false ideologies of the bourgeois past.

It is essential to subordinate the Soviet cultural-educational organs to the guidance of a new cultural Communist ideology—an ideology that is only now being formulated.

It is essential—in all cultural fields, as well as in art—to reject emphatically all the democratic illusions that pervade the vestiges and prejudices of the bourgeoisie.

It is essential to summon the masses to creative activity.

Bowlit, pp. 165-166.



## THE LIQUIDATION OF ILLITERACY

January 29, 1919

*Eradicating illiteracy was a strongly held value of the Bolshevik leaders, and of Russian socialists generally. A better educated workforce was also important to economic development. These concerns are reflected in this decree of the Council of People's Commissars. Achieving this goal in the conditions of 1919 posed tremendous difficulties, but the government did in fact devote great attention to this task during the following years.*

For the purpose of giving the entire population of the Republic the opportunity for conscious participation in the country's political life, the Council of People's Commissars has decreed:

1. Everyone in the Republic from ages 8 to 50 who is unable to read or write is obligated to learn how to read and write in Russian, or in their native language, according to their choice. Instruction is given in government schools both existing and those instituted for the illiterate population according to the plan of the People's Commissariat of Enlightenment.

Note. This activity applies to redarmymen, with the corresponding work in military units taking place with the closest participation of the Red Army and Fleet political departments.

2. The date for liquidation of illiteracy is established by the province and city soviets as appropriate. General plans for liquidation of illiteracy locally are to be formulated by organs of the People's Commissariat of Enlightenment within two months after the publication of the current decree.

3. The People's Commissariat of Enlightenment and its local organs are given the right to recruit, for teaching the illiterate, the country's entire literate population which has not been called to war, as a labor responsibility. Payment is to be made according to the educational worker norm.

4. The People's Commissariat of Enlightenment and its local organs recruit all organizations of the working population (namely trade unions, local Russian Communist Party cells, the Communist Youth League, commissions for work among women, and others) to participate directly in the work of liquidating illiteracy.

5. For those learning to read and write who are working at hourly wages, excluding those occupied at militarized enterprises, the work day is abbreviated by two hours for instruction, with the same wages.

6. For the liquidation of illiteracy the organs of the People's Commissariat of Enlightenment are allowed to use People's Houses, churches, clubs, private homes, appropriate rooms at plants, factories and Soviet institutions, etc.

7. Supply departments are charged with the responsibility to satisfy the needs of those institutions whose goal is to liquidate illiteracy before satisfying the needs of other institutions.

8. Those deviating from the obligations established by the current decree and those hindering the illiterate from attending schools are held criminally responsible.

9. The People's Commissariat of Enlightenment is charged with publishing instructions regarding application of the current decree within a two week period.

*Sbornik dokumentov i materialov po istorii SSSR Sovetskogo perioda*, p. 175.



#### SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO MEET AT A PROPOSED CONFERENCE AT PRINKIPO

February 4, 1919

*At the Paris Peace Conference, where the "Russian Question" came up frequently, the Allied Powers invited all the assorted regimes in Russia to a conference at Prinkipo (Princes Island) in the Sea of Mamora to settle their differences and agree on a political arrangement. The Soviet government quickly accepted. The acceptance is remarkable for the concessions it suggests the Soviets were willing to make (reflecting among other things their ideologically based assumptions about what would buy off the Allies). Despite assertions that its internal situation was improving, this reflects the precarious situation of the Soviet state vis-a-vis the White armies in early 1919. The Whites rejected the proposal and the meeting was never held.*

To the Governments of Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan and the United States of North America.

The Russian Soviet Government has had cognisance, by means of press wireless, of an invitation purporting to be issued by the Entente Powers to all existing Governments in Russia, to send delegates to a Conference at the Island of Prinkipo.

Having received no invitation addressed to itself, and learning (again by means of press communications) that the absence of any reply on its part has been interpreted as a refusal of such invitation, the Russian Soviet Government wishes to prevent any misapprehension regarding its line of action.

In view, also, of the false interpretation systematically given to its actions by the foreign press, the Russian Soviet Government takes this opportunity of outlining its attitude clearly and frankly.

Notwithstanding its increasingly favourable position from both the military and the internal points of view, the Russian Soviet Government attaches such great value to the conclusion of an agreement which would bring hostilities to an end, that it is ready immediately to enter negotiations for this purpose, and even—as it has often said—to purchase such agreement at the price of important sacrifices, with the express reservation that the future development of the Soviet Republic [will not be menaced. In view of the fact that the power of resistance of the enemies which Soviet Russia has to fight depends exclusively on the aid which they receive from the Entente Powers, and that these are, therefore, its only real adversaries, the Russian Soviet Government] sets forth below, for the



benefit of the Entente Powers, the points regarding which it might consider such sacrifices possible, with the object of settling all differences with them.

In view of the special importance which not only the press, but also the representatives of the Entente Governments, attach in their oft-repeated statements to the question of loans, the Soviet Government declares itself, in the first place, willing to meet the demands of the Entente Powers on this point. It does not refuse [to recognize its financial obligations to its creditors who are subjects of the Entente Powers, leaving the precise formulation of the manner in which this point is to be enforced to the special treaties, the elaboration of which is to be one of the tasks of the proposed negotiations.]

Secondly, in view of the difficult financial position of the Russian Soviet Republic and the unsatisfactory condition of its credit abroad, the Russian Soviet Government offers to guarantee the payment of interest on its loans by a certain amount of raw materials, which should be determined through a special agreement.]

[Thirdly,] in view of the great inclination which foreign capital has always displayed to exploit Russia's natural resources for its own advantage, the Russian Soviet Government is disposed to grant mining, timber, and other concessions to nations of the Entente Powers in accordance with strictly regulated conditions, so that no economic or social hardship might be inflicted on Soviet Russia by reason of the stipulations of such concessions.

The fourth point regarding which negotiations might, in the opinion of the Russian Soviet Government, take place with the Entente Powers, is that of cession of territory, the Russian Soviet Government not having determined to exclude from such negotiations at all costs the consideration of the possible annexation of Russian territory by the Entente Powers.

The Russian Soviet Government adds that it would consider as annexation the maintenance within the regions in question—forming part of the territory of the former Russian Empire, with the exception of Poland and Finland—of armed forces of the Entente, or maintained at the expense of the Entente, or enjoying the military, technical, financial, or other support of the said Powers.

As regards points 2 to 4, the importance of the concessions referred to by the Russian Soviet Government will depend on its military situation with regard to the Entente Powers—which situation is at present improving from day to day.

On the northern front, the Soviet troops have just re-taken the town of Shenkursk.

On the eastern front, having temporarily lost Perm, they have recovered Perufa [*sic*], Ufa, Sterlitamak, Belebey, Orenburg and Uralsk. The railway connections with Central Asia are now in their hands.

On the southern front, they have recently taken the important railway stations of Povorino, Alexikovo, Uriupino, Talovaya, Kalach, and Boguchar, which have brought the railway lines of that region into their power. On the south-west, the Ukrainian Soviet troops, debouching from Lugansk, are threatening the rear of Krasnoff's armies.

In the Ukraine, the national Soviet troops have taken Harkoff [Kharkov], Elkaterinoslav, Poltava, Kremenchug, Chernigoff, Ovruch, as well as [many other less important cities. White Russia, Lithuania and Lettonia are almost entirely in the hands of] the Soviet [troops] of these republics, with the large towns of Minsk, Vilna, Riga, Dvinsk, Mitau, Vindau and others. The remarkable consolidation of the internal situation of Soviet Russia has been demonstrated by the negotiations begun with the Soviet Government by the members of the former Constituent Assembly, whose representatives Rakitnikoff (Chairman of Congress), Sviatitsky (Secretary), Volsky, Shmeleff, Burevoff [Burevoi?] Chernenkoff, and Antonoff, all members of the Central Committee of the [Social] Revolutionary Party, arrived in Moscow yesterday, 3rd February.

These well-known Social Revolutionists declared most strongly against Entente intervention in Russia. The improved relations between the Soviet Government and those elements of Russian society hitherto hostile to it are characterised by the changed attitude of the Mensheviks, a meeting of which party likewise protested against Entente intervention, and whose organ "Vpered" appears freely in Moscow.

The general relaxation of tension in the interior shows itself in the abolition of special District Commissions.

Finally, the lies in the foreign press concerning alleged disturbances in Petrograd and elsewhere are pure inventions.

While repeating once more that the situation in which it now finds itself must necessarily influence the extent of the sacrifices it is prepared to make, the Russian Soviet Government still adheres to its proposal to negotiate on the basis of the points enumerated above.

As regards the frequent complaints in the press of Entente countries concerning its international revolutionary propaganda, the Russian Soviet Government, whilst pointing out that it cannot limit the freedom of the revolutionary press, declares its readiness to include in a general agreement with the Entente Powers the undertaking not to intervene in their internal affairs.

On these general lines, the Russian Soviet Government is prepared to open negotiations immediately on the Island of Prinkipo or elsewhere, either with all the Entente Powers or with any of them separately, or with any political groups in Russia, in accordance with the request of the Entente Powers.

The [Soviet] Government [requests the] Entente Powers to inform it without delay of the place to which its representatives shall betake themselves, also the date of the meeting and the proposed route.

*Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Russia, 1918*, Vol. 1, pp. 39-42.



## OPENING OF A WORKERS' HIGHER EDUCATION FACULTY

February 12, 1919

*Creating special workers' faculties within higher education institutions was one way the Bolsheviks sought to carry through a social revolution, and was seen as an important step in preparing the proletariat to take command of their own fate. For a fuller explanation of the Workers' Faculties, see the introduction to the decree formally establishing them, September 11, 1919, below (and the decree of August 2, 1918, opening higher education to all). This account of the first to be established—before the decree—both suggests their purpose and is a typical account of the numerous public assemblies held to inaugurate new undertakings. Notable also is Timiryazev's greeting, with its acknowledgement that most of the professorate, especially those as scientifically prominent as he, opposed these new measures.*

The G.V. Plekhanoff-Beltov Auditorium (formerly the Marx Auditorium) is rapidly filling with student workers. The vast room is decorated with banners, red streamers and portraits of the leaders of Socialism. The full length of the screen is covered with red cloth, inscribed with G.V. Plekhanoff's well-known words: "The revolutionary movement of Russia will triumph only as a revolutionary movement of the workers; there is not and cannot be any other outcome." Higher up, above the screen, there is Plekhanoff's portrait. Among the masses of workers present there are many working-women. A.V. Lunacharsky, N.M. Pokrovsky and representatives of trade unions and associations are present at the opening.

### Introductory Address by N.M. Pokrovsky

N.M. Pokrovsky is elected, amid a storm of general applause, as chairman of the meeting. Having extended greetings to the workers' faculty, Comrade Pokrovsky said: "It was my

chief aim during my work in the People's Commissariat of Education to see the worker in the university. Now I see the realization of my cherished hope. We will have student-proletarians, and later on professors as well, and I hope that such examples will come in tens, hundreds, and thousands."

Then the chairman of the Organizing Committee of the Workers' Faculty, Comrade Baer (Baganians) gave a short review of the birth and organization of the workers' faculty.

#### Prof. Nikitinsky's Greetings

The dean of the Institute, Prof. Nikitinsky, when greeting the opening of the workers' faculty in the name of the teachers' committee, said among other things: "In the past very little has been done in this sphere, consequently very much is to be done now. The success of this work can be attained on the following three conditions: 1) conscious, earnest attitude of the workers; 2) the aid of the students, who have so zealously begun this work; 3) the aid and sympathetic attitude of the professors." Prof. Nikitinsky closed his speech with greetings to the workers' faculty and especially to the workmen-students.

#### A. V. Lunacharsky's Address

In a long, animated speech A. V. Lunacharsky pointed out that formerly the workers were merely unconscious parts of the machine. The machine, this monstrous idol, sapped all the strength out of a worker and then cast him into the street. Therefore, the worker cursed the machine, as well as science and the universities. But science was born for the purpose of freeing man from slavish labor. If capitalism made of the worker an automaton, the free worker, with the aid of science, can learn to become the director of unconscious mechanism. To be a ruling class it is not sufficient to have the power—it is also necessary to have the knowledge. This welding of economic, natural and technical science is the highway by which the workers can come to Socialism. "We will conquer and will conquer soon," was the conclusion of Comrade Lunacharsky's speech.

"The proletariat has nothing to lose," said Marx, "and the world to gain." Then Comrade Pokrovsky read the following letter sent by K. A. Timiryazev:

"Young comrades:—Old age and illness do not permit me to appear in person, but I do not wish that my absence should be taken as a sign of indifference to the first free workers' faculty, which was my dream for a number of years.

"Science and democracy—a close union of knowledge and labor—this was my dream, cherished for several decades, and in your meeting of today I see the beginning of the realization of one of its main phases. The workers became a real, conscious, creative force; when the main conquests of science will be understood by them, and science will receive a true and stable support, then its fate will be in the hands of the enlightened people themselves and not of the kings and their slaves, though these may call themselves Ministers of Education, Academicians, and Professors.

"Pure universal science must not, cannot and will not be the exclusive monopolized property of those who are not the 'chosen' ones, but on the contrary, merely cast out, despised, intriguing adventurers to whom the problems of democracy are as foreign as science itself. I hail the first workers' faculty, and wish that all who unite under this name and under the protection of the red banner of labor, equalizing all, should come here only in search of the knowledge necessary for their labor and should cast aside all formalities, diplomas and the complicated examinations, ranks and distinctions, which lower the dignity of science, as well as of democracy.

"The Red Banner"—I purposely mention these words for I know that my colleagues from the bourgeois camp cannot forgive me for having joined the forces under this banner in the days when the dark forces of the entire world have fallen upon it, hoping to drown it in blood once more. The red banner is a symbol of the future conquest of labor and science over their enemies. But what this conquest will give us will be peace, bread and freedom. Yes, and something else... [ellipsis in original, ed.] less noticeable, but not less important and that

is—leisure, an eight-hour working day, which will be followed, of course, by a still shorter working day. The free democracy, which has won this leisure, will become an educated democracy when it comes to realize the necessity of utilizing this leisure for attaining the power of knowledge. That the free democracy will want it, that it will be able to do it is guaranteed best by today's meeting."

#### Speeches Delivered by the Representatives of the Professors

After the address delivered by the representative of the All-Russian Association of Professional Unions, Comrade Kozolev, Professors Genkin and Ougrimov delivered greetings.

"Great is the power of knowledge and at no time was knowledge so necessary for any one as it is now for our proletariat, which has now placed itself at the head of the state power—said Genkin. Today is our holiday of learning, our holiday of education, as this is the first time that a workers' faculty has been organized within the walls of a higher educational institution." The meeting was adjourned after the sending of greetings to K.A. Timiryazev and with the singing of the "Internationale."

*Soviet Russia*, June 14, 1919, pp. 15-16.



### A SOCIALIST SYSTEM OF AGRICULTURE

February 14, 1919

*The Fundamental Law on Socialization of the Land of January 27, 1918, declared the land to be socialized and provided for its use by individuals and groups, but contained only a brief reference to collective farming. This new law in 1919, however, took a fundamentally different tone. It not only clarified land ownership (the state), but asserted the importance of collective, Soviet, or other forms of cooperative farming. Only the first part, "General Principles," of this lengthy document is given here; the rest primarily details what lands can be used for what purposes, how they are to be distributed, and some rules for administration of Soviet, communal, and collective farms.*

#### REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION OF THE LAND AND MEASURES FOR FACILITATING THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SOCIALIST SYSTEM OF AGRICULTURE

##### CHAPTER I

##### GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Article 1. All land within the boundaries of the R.S.F.S.R., regardless of who is using it, shall be considered a single state fund.

Article 2. This single state fund is under the direct control and supervision of the various people's commissariats and the local authorities subordinate to these commissariats.

Article 3. In order to abolish completely every form of exploitation of man by man; to organize agriculture on socialist principles with the application of all the conquests of science and technology; to educate the toiling masses in the spirit of socialism; and to unite the proletariat and the village poor in their fight against capital—it is imperative to pass from individual to cooperative forms of agriculture. Large Soviet farms, communes, collective farming, and other forms of cooperative agriculture are the best means to attain this end. All forms of individual agriculture are therefore to be regarded as transitory and as having outlived their time.

Article 4. The main object of the organization of agriculture is the creation of a unified economy of production capable of supplying the Soviet Republic with a maximum of economic goods at a minimum expenditure of the people's labor.

Article 5. To attain this object the land departments are charged with the following duties in connection with the regulation of agriculture: (a) The separation of lands used for agriculture from those used for other purposes; (b) the exclusion from the agricultural land fund of lands which are not to be distributed for individual cultivation; (c) the elimination of scattered strip holdings, holdings far removed from any village, etc.; (d) the distribution of the land among the toiling population for the purpose of developing agriculture; (e) the distribution of land used for other purposes; (f) the investigation of means of enlarging the agricultural land fund; (g) the taking of a census of the land and the agricultural population....

Bunyan, *Intervention, Civil War and Communism in Russia*, p. 492.



## HOUSING IN MOSCOW

February 24-27, 1919

*Housing was a major problem in the cities, especially Moscow. The state issued several decrees taking rooms from the propertied classes and forcing sharing of space, while various agencies appropriated space on their own authority. Got'e (see the introduction to January 5, 1919) records the process of loss of their apartment over several months. These passages describe only one stage; in March they were forced to move out altogether, into quarters at the Rumiantsev Museum where he was associate director. "Our lovingly built nest has been destroyed, and god knows where and when we will be able to build it again. We are living in a bivouac, as one should now." Conditions were worse for the lower classes.*

24 [February]. The question of doubling up is being clarified: today we spent the last day in our dining room; tomorrow we will give it up either to Babogin [?] with three children and a witch for a wife, or to Rubtsov, an engineer with a big family. Such are the vicissitudes of contemporary life. The thought is growing ever stronger that the complete liquidation of the apartment is inevitable. No news at all, unless one counts the fact that inspectors from among the Western socialists are coming here—Kautsky, Adler, Hilferding, Henderson, Longuet, and the like. What can they give us? Nothing, or something even worse than what we have.

25 [February]. The moving inside our apartment has been done; fatigue, disorder, dismay; all this is so barbaric and so unnecessary, and so contemporary. Nothing new from the outside, all as before. The fantastic staff roster of the Rumiantsev Museum has taken a new step toward its realization. The staff of the faculty of social sciences is also going through. In the evening I attended the trial lecture of A.A. Novosel'skii: a very keen mind; an excellent lecture on the subject of "Noble Landowning After the Time of Troubles and After 1861." He is the first of the young generation of historians we are putting up as our replacements. I think he will be a good continuator of the school of Kliuchevskii.

27 [February]. Two days were spent in moving, and here we are now, crowded into two rooms that barely accommodate that part of our belongings we need for living. Try in such conditions to study and contribute to scholarship, that is, to fulfill the obligation from which the Bolsheviks have not excused us. At first I was very sad to leave another third of the

apartment and remain in the two back rooms; sad, because when we moved into this apartment, we thought it would be our apartment for life, because it suited us in all respects. But once having moved, I feel light and recall Pecherin's verses about the man sailing on the sea in a canoe; one more anchor cut away, one less hindrance. One should live in a bivouac until one dies, or leaves, or survives this terrible time. The fact remains that it is impossible to live in such crowded conditions and a way out will have to be sought by moving into the museum, which I have refused to do for an entire twenty years. Haze on the general horizon. I heard that they are offering jobs listening to private telephone conversations by right of military censorship; such an offer was made to my comrade, V.A.K. I am becoming ever more convinced that the coming of the socialist delegation bodes nothing good for us. By the way, the house of A.V. [?] Rerikh in Malyi Karetnyi Pereulok has been requisitioned for them: thus the luminaries of socialism will live in stolen property; that is stylish and fitting.

Got'e, pp. 244-245. Brackets by editor of the diary.



## RESOLUTIONS CONSTITUTING THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

March 4, 1919

*The first Comintern Congress opened March 2 in the Kremlin in Moscow. Only a minority of the 50 plus attendees had any kind of mandate. Most were foreign radicals who happened to be in Moscow and took on the role of spokesmen for various extant or non-existent leftist parties, often without the knowledge of the group for whom they claimed to speak. Nonetheless, they gave reports on the situation in their various countries (to the extent they were familiar with them), discussed the various issues and undertook to found an International and establish its first platform. Although opposed as premature by Eberlein, the German delegate and the most important foreign representative, the Congress resolved to constitute the International. The two documents which follow are respectively the proposal to constitute the International and the resolution doing so.*

### MOTION TOWARDS THE CONSTITUTION OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

The representatives of the Communist Party of German Austria, the left Social-Democratic Party of Sweden, the Social-Democratic Revolutionary Labour Confederation of the Balkans, and the Communist Party of Hungary move the founding of the Communist International.

1. The necessity of fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat requires a united, determined international organization of all communistic elements standing on that platform.

2. The founding of such a centre is our duty all the more as at the present moment in Berne, and possibly later at other places, the attempt is being made to regenerate the old opportunist International and to rally all the wavering, undetermined proletarian elements round it. This renders necessary a sharp distinction between revolutionary proletarian and social-traitorous elements.

3. Were the Third International not to be founded by the Moscow conference, the inference might be drawn that the Communist parties are disunited. This would weaken our position and deepen the confusion among the irresolute proletarian elements of all countries.

4. The constitution of the Third International is therefore an unconditional historic necessity and must be realized by the International Communist Conference meeting in Moscow.

## RESOLUTION CONSTITUTING THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

The International Communist Conference resolves to constitute itself as the Third International and to call itself the Communist International. The proportion of voting rights remains unchanged. All parties, organizations and groups have the right of declaring their adhesion to the Third International within a space of 8 months.

*Communist International*, No. 1 (May, 1919), pp. 127-128 with minor modifications by the editor.



## FIRST PLATFORM OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

March 6, 1919

*Once the decision to constitute the International was taken, a proposed platform which had been introduced on March 4 by Bukharin was adopted. It attacked the capitalist order and asserted the coming of the epoch of Communist revolution, attacked parliamentarianism and "bourgeois democracy," and assailed the efforts of socialists in Western Europe to revive the Second International. Optimism that world revolution was beginning runs throughout the document.*

## PLATFORM OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

The antagonisms of the capitalist world system, which were hidden beneath the surface, evidenced themselves with extraordinary force in a stupendous explosion, the great imperialist world war.

Capitalism attempted to overcome its own anarchy through organising production. The place of numerous competing investors was taken up by formations of powerful capitalist associations (syndicates, cartels and trusts); banking capital united with industrial capital; the entire economic life was dominated by the oligarchy of financial capital which, through the exercise of the power gained through its organisations, became the exclusive ruling power. Free competition was superseded by monopoly. The individual capitalist becomes a member of a capitalist association. Senseless anarchy yields its place to organisation.

But to the same degree as the anarchy of the capitalist system of production is being replaced by capitalist organisation in separate countries, the antagonism, the competition and the anarchy in world economics grow more accentuated. The struggle between the largest organised exploiting states led with iron necessity to the tremendous imperialistic world war. Lust for profits drove world capital into the struggle for new markets, new spheres for investing capital, new resources of raw materials and cheap labour of colonial slaves. The imperialist states, which have partitioned up the entire world among themselves, who have transformed the African, Asiatic, Australian and American proletarians and peasants into beasts of burden by millions, were of necessity sooner or later bound to expose in a tremendous conflagration the eminently anarchic nature of capital. Thus the greatest crime was perpetrated—the destructive world war.

Capitalism tried also to surmount the contradictions of its antagonistic *social structure*. Bourgeois society is a class society. The capital of the largest "civilised" states wanted to erase these social antagonisms. At the expense of the despoiled colonial peoples it corrupted its own wage slaves, created a community of interests of the exploited and the exploiters with regard to the oppressed colonies—the yellow, black and red colonial peoples—and bound European and American labour to the imperialistic fatherland.

But this very same method of permanent corruption with which the patriotism of the labouring class and its mental subjection were attained, worked to an opposite purpose owing to the war. Physical annihilation, complete enslavement of the proletariat, unheard-of oppression, pauperisation, degeneration and universal starvation—such was the eventual price for the “class truce.” It broke down. *The imperialistic war resulted in civil war.*

The new epoch is born. The epoch of the decomposition of capitalism, of its inner disintegration. *The epoch of the communist revolution of the proletariat has come.*

The imperialist system is breaking down. Fermentation in the colonies, fermentation among the previously independent small nations, revolts of the proletariat, victorious proletarian revolutions in some countries, dissolution of the imperialist armies, complete inability of the ruling classes to retain the further directing of the fate of nations, such is the picture of present conditions in the entire world.

Humanity, whose entire culture is now wrecked, is threatened with the peril of complete destruction. There is only one force to save it and that force is the proletariat. The old capitalist “order” exists no more, it cannot prevail any longer. The eventual result of the capitalist method of production is chaos, which can only be overcome by the greatest and most productive class—the labouring class. It must create a real order—the communist order. It must break the rule of capital, make wars an impossibility, abolish the frontiers of states, transform the entire world into a self-supplying, working community and realise the fraternization and the liberation of nations.

World capital is arming for the last struggle against this eventuality. Under cover of the “League of Nations” and a pacifist torrent of phrases it is straining its last efforts to reattach the spontaneously disjoining parts of the capitalist system and to direct its forces against the constantly growing proletarian revolution.

This new tremendous plot of the capitalist class must be frustrated by the proletariat through the conquest of political power and through directing this power against its class enemies and using it as a lever for economic revolution. The final victory of the proletariat of the world signifies the inception of the real history of liberated humanity.

#### CONQUEST OF POLITICAL POWER

The conquest of political power through the proletariat is tantamount to the annihilation of the political power of the bourgeoisie. The most effective means of domination by the bourgeoisie is found in the state apparatus with its capitalist army commanded by bourgeois and gentry officers, with its police and gendarmerie, with its jailers and judges, with its priests, state officials, etc. The conquest of political power does not merely imply personnel changes in the government offices, but entails the destruction of the hostile state apparatus, the conquest of actual power, the disarming of the bourgeoisie, of the counter-revolutionary officers and of the white guard, and the arming of the proletariat, of the revolutionary soldiers, of the red labour guard. It further necessitates the removal of all bourgeois judges and the organisation of proletarian courts, the abolition of the rule of reactionary state officials and the creation of new administrative organs of the proletariat. The victory of the proletariat presupposes the disorganisation of the hostile power and the organisation of a proletarian power. It demands the smashing of the bourgeois state apparatus and the building up of a proletarian state apparatus. Only after the proletariat has accomplished its victory, after it has broken the resistance of the bourgeoisie, can it utilize its former enemies for the new order through placing them under its control and through making them gradually participate in the work of communist construction.

#### DEMOCRACY AND DICTATORSHIP

The proletarian state, like any other state, is an apparatus for oppression, but one directed against the enemies of the working class. Its purpose is to break the resistance of the exploiters, who in this desperate struggle are using every means of drowning the revolution in blood and to make such resistance impossible in the future. The dictatorship of the



proletariat, which openly gives the latter a privileged position in society is, however, a temporary institution. To the extent that the resistance of the bourgeoisie is being broken and it becomes expropriated and gradually turns into a labouring social stratum, proletarian dictatorship disappears, the state dies away and with it the classes themselves.

So-called democracy, that is bourgeois democracy, is nothing but the disguised dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The much-exalted universal "will of the people" does as little exist as does "the people" as a whole. What in reality exists are classes with contrary and incompatible wills. The bourgeoisie, forming but a small minority, needs this fiction, the illusion of a "will of the people," in order to establish more firmly its rule over the labouring classes through the application of this well-sounding phrase and in order to force upon them the will of its own class. In contrast, the proletariat, forming the vast majority of the population, is quite openly exercising the class power of its mass organisations, its soviets, in order to abolish the privileges of the bourgeoisie and in order to secure the transition to the communist society, which is free from classes.

In bourgeois democracy paramount importance is attached to the purely formal declaration of rights and liberties which, however, are unattainable by the proletarians and semi-proletarians who own no material resources, whereas the bourgeoisie uses its material resources to delude and defraud the people by its press and through its organisations. In contrast, the soviet system means a new type of state power that attaches paramount importance to providing to the proletariat the possibility of realising its rights and liberties. Soviet power gives the best palaces, houses, printing offices, paper supplies, etc. to the people for its press, its meetings, its associations. It is only by such means that real proletarian democracy becomes possible.

Bourgeois democracy with its parliamentary system is through mere words imparting the illusion of their participation in state administration. In fact, the masses and their organisations are kept completely at a distance from real power and from real state administration. Within the soviet system the mass organisations and through it the masses themselves do the work of administration as the soviets are bringing a constantly growing proportion of workers into the state administration. Only thus can the entire working people gradually be made to participate in the real state administration. Thus the soviet system is based upon the mass organisation of the proletariat, upon the soviets themselves, upon the revolutionary trade-unions, the cooperative societies and so on.

Bourgeois democracy and the parliamentary system accentuate the separation of the masses from the state through the division of legislative and executive power and through the irrevocability of parliamentary mandates. The soviet system to the contrary, by the right of recall, by the union of legislative and executive power and by the capacity of working collegia of the soviets, is connecting the masses with the organs of administration. This connection is also being promoted by the fact that within the soviet system electoral units are formed not through artificial boundaries but through units of production.

Thus the soviet system is realizing true proletarian democracy, a democracy for and through the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. This system gives preference to the industrial proletariat as to the leading, best organised and politically most mature class, under whose hegemony the semi-proletariat and small peasantry of the country are gradually to be lifted. These temporary privileges of the industrial proletariat must be used to enfranchise the poor petty bourgeois masses of the country from the influence of the rural richer farmers and bourgeoisie and in order to organize and educate them for joint work in communist construction.

#### EXPROPRIATION OF THE BOURGEOISIE AND SOCIALIZATION OF PRODUCTION

The decomposition of capitalist order and capitalist labour discipline renders the restoration of production on the former basis under the existing class relations impossible. Wage struggles, even when successful, do not result in the hoped-for improvement of the standard

of life, as the rapid rising of the cost of all commodities soon renders any success illusory. The standard of life of the workers can only be raised if production is not controlled by the bourgeoisie but by the proletariat. The mighty wage struggles of the workers in all countries, which clearly demonstrate the desperateness of the situation, are, through their elemental momentum and tendency to spread, making the continuation of capitalist production impossible. For the purpose of raising the productive powers of the economic system and for breaking as soon as possible the resistance of the bourgeoisie, which but prolongs the agony of the old society and thereby creates the danger of complete ruin of economic life, it is necessary for proletarian dictatorship to carry out the expropriation of the large bourgeoisie and of the landed proprietors and to proclaim the means of production and transport to be the common property of the proletarian state.

Communism is now taking birth from the ruins of capitalism and history leaves no other way out. The opportunists who are making the utopian demand for the restoration of capitalist economics in order to defer socialization, are only prolonging the process of dissolution and bringing about the danger of complete ruin. The communist revolution is the best and at the same time the sole means of preserving the most important social productive power, the proletariat, and with it society itself.

Proletarian dictatorship does not by any means entail any division of the means of production and transport. Quite the contrary: it purposes to centralise productive forces and to subordinate the entire production to a single scheme.

As the first steps towards socialization of the entire economic system must be mentioned: socialization of the big banking apparatus which is now ruling production, the conquest of all economic-capitalistic organs of the state by taking them over into the state power of the proletariat, the taking under management of all communal concerns; the socialization of those branches of production which are managed by syndicates or trusts and also of such branches of production where the concentration and centralization of capital allows it technically; the socialisation of agricultural estates and their transformation into communally managed agricultural undertakings.

With regard to smaller concerns, the proletariat has to unite them gradually, according to their respective sizes.

In this connection it must be distinctly understood that the lesser proprietors are not by any means to be expropriated and that the owners who are not exploiting hired labour are not to be exposed to any forcible interference. This stratum is gradually being drawn into socialist organization through example and through practice, which show it the advantages of the new order, the order which is freeing the lesser peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie from the economic pressure of usurious capital and landowners, from the burden of taxes (especially through the abrogation of state loans), etc.

The task of proletarian dictatorship in the economic sphere can only be solved in proportion to the ability of the proletariat to create centralised administrative organs of production and to put administration into the hands of the workers. It must necessarily utilize for this purpose those of its mass organisations which are most closely affiliated to the process of production.

In the sphere of distribution proletarian dictatorship must replace trade by the correct distribution of products. In this direction the following measures are to be mentioned: socialization of the big trading houses, the taking over of the whole bourgeois public distribution apparatus, control over the big cooperative associations whose organizations are yet to play an important economic part in the transition period; the gradual centralization of all these organs and their transmutation into a single unit, which is to effect rationally the distribution of products.

Both in the sphere of production and in the sphere of distribution all qualified technicians and specialists are to be utilized, provided their political resistance is broken and they are capable of fitting themselves not into the capitalist system, but to the new system of production.

The proletariat will not oppress them, but on the contrary, give them the possibility of developing the most intensive creative work. To the separation of mental and manual labour, created by capitalism, proletarian dictatorship will substitute their cooperation and thus reunite science with labour.

Besides the expropriation of factories, mines, estates, etc. the proletariat must also abolish the exploitation of the population by capitalist house owners, through turning large houses over to the local workers' soviets, by relocating the workers into bourgeois houses etc.

During this great revolutionary period soviet power is to build up the entire administrative apparatus along lines of increasing centralization, while on the other hand constantly increasing strata of the working people are to be made to participate in the direct administration.

#### THE ROAD TO VICTORY

The revolutionary epoch demands the application of those methods of struggle which concentrate the entire energy of the proletariat: namely the method of mass actions and—their logical outcome—direct collision with the bourgeois state machine in open combat. Subject to this aim are all other methods, for instance revolutionary utilization of the bourgeois parliamentary system.

An essential prerequisite for a successful struggle is breaking not only with the direct lackeys of capital and the executioners of communist revolution (the part played by the right wing of social democrats) but also with the centre (Kautsky's followers) who abandon the proletariat at critical junctures in order to flirt with its open enemies.

On the other hand close union is necessary with those elements of the revolutionary labour movement which, though formerly not belonging to the socialist party, at present accept the point of view of proletarian dictatorship in the form of soviet power; for instance, the corresponding elements of syndicalism.

The growth of the revolutionary movement in all countries, the danger of this revolution being stifled through the alliance of capitalist states, the attempts of the social-traitor parties to unite with each other (the formation of the yellow "international" in Bern) in order to serve the Wilson league, and finally the absolute necessity of coordinating proletarian actions, all this requires the foundation of a genuinely revolutionary and genuinely proletarian communist international.

The International, declaring the interests of the international revolution to be supreme over so-called national interest, will realise the mutual help of the proletariat in the various countries, for without mutual help, economic and otherwise, the proletariat will not be able to organize the new society. On the other hand, in opposition to the yellow social-patriotic International, international proletarian communism will support the exploited colonial peoples in their struggles against imperialism in order to promote the final collapse of the imperialist world system.

The capitalist criminals maintained at the outset of the world war that they were only defending each their own fatherland. German imperialism however, through its bloody acts in Russia, in Ukraine and in Finland soon revealed its real predatory nature. The Allied powers have at present unmasked themselves even before the retrograde portions of the population as world bandits and murderers of the proletariat. With hypocritical phrases about peace on their lips they strangled, hand in hand with the German bourgeoisie and social-patriots, through their war machines and stupefied barbarian colonial soldiers, the revolution of the European proletariat. Indescribable is the aftermath of the white terror of the bourgeois cannibals. Countless are the victims that perished among the labour classes. Its best fighters, Liebknecht and Luxemburg, are dead. The proletariat must defend itself at any cost. The Communist International appeals to the entire world proletariat to go forth into this last struggle. Weapon against weapon. Force against force. Down with the imperialist plot of capital! Long live the international republic of the proletarian Soviets!

## MANIFESTO OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

March 6, 1919

*Written by Trotsky and apparently intended as the major statement of the Congress, the Manifesto was adopted unanimously at the last session. It boldly declared the little band gathered in Moscow to be the true heirs of Marx and Engels and that their task was to generalize the revolutionary experience of the working class, rid the movement of opportunists and social-patriots, mobilize the genuinely revolutionary parties, and thereby hasten the worldwide victory of the Communist revolution. It took special care to attack the socialists supporting the Second International, and called for both proletarian revolution and colonial revolt.*

## MANIFESTO

Of the Communist International to the proletarians of the world

Seventy-two years ago, the Communist Party proclaimed its programme to the world in the shape of a Manifesto drawn up by the greatest exponents of the proletarian revolution, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. At that time, communism had scarcely entered the arena of battle, but it was already beset by the pestering lies, the hatred and the persecutions of the propertied classes who rightly supposed it to be their deadly foe. In the three-quarters of a century since, the development of communism has followed a highly complex course. Sudden revivals were succeeded by periods of decline, and brilliant successes by bitter defeats. In substance, however, the movement was progressing along the lines forecast by the Manifesto of the Communist Party. The moment of the last decisive battle came later than the apostles of social revolution had expected and hoped for. Yet it has come. We, the communists of today, representing the revolutionary proletariat of various countries in Europe, America and Asia, and assembled in Soviet-governed Moscow, feel it incumbent upon us to continue and bring to completion the task outlined in the programme of seventy-two years ago. It is our object to summarize the revolutionary experience of the working classes, to purge the movement of the decomposing admixtures of opportunism and social-patriotism, to unite the efforts of all truly revolutionary parties of the world's proletariat, thus facilitating and hastening the victory of the communistic revolution throughout the world.

Now that Europe is one mass of wreckage, a smouldering ruin, the greatest incendiaries are busily engaged in looking for the originators of the war. They are followed by their henchmen—professors, parliamentarians, journalists, social-patriots and other political panders of the bourgeoisie.

For many years past, socialism had been predicting an imminent imperialistic war, tracing its causes to the insatiable greed of the propertied classes on either side and in all capitalistic countries generally. Two years before the explosion, the responsible leaders of socialism, assembled in congress at Basle, denounced imperialism as inevitably leading to war and threatened the bourgeoisie with bringing upon their heads a socialistic revolution as a retaliation of the proletariat for the crimes of militarism. Now, after five years' experience, after History has brought into light the covetousness of Germany and disclosed actions no less criminal on the part of the Allies, the state socialists of the Entente countries follow in the wake of their governments in declaring the deposed German Kaiser the originator of the war. More than that, the German "social-patriots," who, in August 1914, proclaimed "The White Book" of the Hohenzollern the most sacred of people's gospels, have now, with cringing sycophancy, joined the Entente socialists in denouncing the late German monarchy (whom they used to slavishly serve) as being chiefly responsible for the war. They hope this will make the others forget their own part in the war and win for them the favours of the victors. Beside, however, the part taken in the war by the deposed dynasties—the Romanoffs, the Hohenzollerns, the Habsburgs, and the capitalistic cliques of those countries,

the recent events and the diplomatic revelations have brought into striking relief the conduct of the governing classes in France, England, Italy and the United States of America.

Up to the very moment of the explosion, English diplomacy had forbore to raise its mysterious vizard. The government of the City was afraid to openly show its intention of casting in its lot with the Entente, lest the government of Berlin should desist from the war. London wanted war. That is why it behaved so, as to induce Berlin and Vienna to count upon England's neutrality, while Paris and Petersburg firmly believed in its intervention.

The war that had been brewing for decades was allowed to break loose through the direct and fully conscious provocation of Great Britain. The government of the latter intended to assist France and Russia to such extent only as was necessary in order to exhaust them; by this process, England also hoped to exhaust Germany, its deadly foe. The power of German militarism, however, proved too formidable to be put down by a mere show of interference, and England had to join the war in good earnest! The part of the laughing third, which Great Britain claimed on the strength of an old tradition, fell to the lot of the United States.

The Washington government was the more easily reconciled to the English blockade, which somewhat curtailed the American exchange speculation in European blood, as the Entente powers generously compensated any violation of international law by ensuring enormous profits to the American bourgeoisie. The prodigious military supremacy of Germany, however, finally induced Washington to abandon its fictitious neutrality. The United States assumed, with regard to the whole of Europe, the part England had in fact played with regard to the continent in previous wars and had vainly tried to maintain in the present, namely, to use one of the parties for weakening the other and to take part in the military operations only as necessary to ensure for herself all the advantages of the position. Wilson's stake was, according to American lottery methods, but a small one, but it was the last, and he won the first prize.

As a result of the war, the inconsistencies of capitalistic organization have been forcibly brought before mankind in the shape of physical suffering, such as hunger, cold, epidemics, and, morally, in the shape of a marked reversion to the savage state. This settles once and for all a debatable point in academic socialism, namely the theory of impoverishment and the gradual transition from capitalism to socialism. The pedantic believers in a gradual obliteration of inconsistencies, and its statisticians have, for many decades past, been fishing out of every corner of the world real and imaginary facts showing the increase in the prosperity of various groups and categories of the working classes. The theory of the impoverishment of the masses was considered dead and buried to the accompaniment of scornful hisses on the part of the eunuchs of the bourgeois universities, and the mandarins of socialist opportunism. At present that impoverishment, not only a social one but also a physiological and a biological one, is facing us in all its shocking reality.

All the achievements of professional and parliamentary struggle have been swept clean away by the catastrophe of the imperialistic war. The war itself, however, is as much an outcome of the inner tendencies of capitalism as the economic and parliamentary compromises it has buried in blood and mire.

Financial capital, which precipitated mankind into the abyss of war, has itself undergone a catastrophic change in that war. The dependence of paper currency on the material basis of production has been completely disturbed. Paper money, more and more diminishing in importance as an instrument and regulator of capitalistic barter, finally became an instrument of requisition, of confiscation, and of military and economic violence.

The degeneration of paper money reflects the mortal crisis of capitalistic barter. If free competition, as a regulator of production and distribution, had, in the most important branches of economic life, been superseded by a system of trusts and monopolies in the decades preceding the war, it was under the influence of the latter that the lead has been wrested from the hands of economic combines and placed in those of military authorities.

The distribution of raw materials, the consumption of Baku and Roumanian oil, of Donetz coal, of corn from the Ukraine, the fate of German railway engines, carriages and automobiles, the supply to starving Europe of corn and meat, all these essential questions of the world's economic life are at present regulated not by free competition or by national and international trusts and consortiums; they are determined by the direct application of military violence, in the interests of its subsequent preservation. If the complete subjection of the state to capital had led mankind to imperialistic slaughter, by that very slaughter capital has completely militarized not only the state, but also its own self, and is no longer capable of fulfilling its basic economic functions otherwise than by blood and iron.

The opportunists, those who before the war, urged upon the working men the necessity of moderation in order to ensure a gradual transition to socialism, and who during the war, preached class humility for the sake of civil peace and home defence, are now appealing to the proletariat for self-sacrifice and self-abnegation, this time in order to get over the disastrous consequences of the war. Should this teaching be brought home to the labouring masses, capitalistic organisation would be restored over the bones of a number of generations, assuming still more concentrated and monstrous forms, with the prospect of an inevitable universal war! Fortunately for mankind, this is not possible.

The state control over economic life, which elicited the strongest protest from capitalistic liberalism, has now become an accomplished fact. At present, there is no going back not only to free competition, but even to the oligarchy of trusts, syndicates and other economic octopuses. The issue lies between the imperialistic state and the state of the victorious proletariat, as to which of them shall henceforth be the steward of state-controlled production.

In other words: shall all labouring humanity become tributary slaves to the triumphant clique which, under the firm of the League of Nations and assisted by an international army and an international navy, will plunder and oppress some, throw tasty morsels to others and everywhere and on all occasions, forge fetters for the proletariat, with the sole aim of maintaining and perpetuating its own supremacy? Or shall the working classes of Europe and of other advanced countries take possession of the dilapidated, tottering structure of the world's husbandry and ensure its regeneration on socialist principles?

Nothing short of a dictatorship of the proletariat can reduce the duration of the present crisis. That dictatorship should not look back upon the past, nor take into account any hereditary privileges or rights of ownership, being solely guided by the necessity to succour the starving masses. It should, for that purpose, mobilize all forces and use all available means, introduce compulsory labour and labour discipline, in order to cure, within a few years, the gaping wounds inflicted by the war, and lift mankind to a new, hitherto unprecedented height.

The national state, which gave a powerful start to the growth of capitalistic organisation, has been outmoded by the development of productive forces. The position of small countries, jammed in between the great powers in Europe and elsewhere, has become more difficult. These petty states, which sprang up at various dates as clippings pared off in cutting the big ones, as the small coin used in payment for services rendered, as strategic buffers, have their own dynasties, their own governing cliques, their own diplomatic rogueries. Their illusory independence had before the war the same unstable basis as the equilibrium of Europe: the permanent antagonism of the two imperialistic camps. The war has upset that equilibrium. It temporarily gave an enormous supremacy to Germany, and compelled the smaller states to look for their salvation to German militarism. No sooner had Germany been defeated, than the bourgeoisie of those small states, supported by their patriotic "socialists" turned to the triumphant imperialism of the Allies and looked for a guarantee of their further independence in the hypocritical articles of Wilson's programme. The number of such small states was at the same time increased by the addition of newly created units split off the empire of the tsars and from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy; though scarcely born, these states

are already flying at each other's throats over the question of boundaries. The Allied imperialists are in the meantime organizing combines of small states, old and new, with a view to uniting them by a common pledge of hatred and mutual weakness.

While they wrong and oppress small and weak nations in consigning them to hunger and humiliation, the Allied imperialists talk a great deal (just as much, in fact, as the imperialists of the central empires did some time ago) of the nations' right of self-determination, a right which has now been trodden under foot in Europe and in all other parts of the world.

The proletarian revolution alone is capable of ensuring to the small peoples a free and independent existence. It will liberate the productive forces of all countries from the clutches of national states; it will unite the nations in the closest possible economic cooperation based on a common economic scheme, it will enable even the smallest and least numerous of nations to direct the affairs of its own national culture without the interference of any other state, and without any prejudice to the united and centralized economic body of Europe and of the world.

The last war, fought *for* the colonies, was also, to a certain extent, fought *by* the colonies. The population of the colonies was, to an unprecedented degree, involved in the European struggle. Hindus, Negroes, Arabs, Malays fought on European territory—for the sake of what? to defend their right to remain the slaves of England and France. Never before had the infamy of the capitalistic rule in the colonies offered so striking a picture, nor the problem of colonial slavery been so poignant as at present.

Hence, a series of open mutinies and a revolutionary fermentation throughout the colonies. In Europe itself, Ireland recalled to its neighbours in bloody street riots that it was and felt itself a down-trodden country still. In Madagascar, in Annam and elsewhere, the troops of the bourgeois republic had many a time during the war put down mutinies of colonial slaves. In India, the revolutionary movement had not been in abeyance for a single day, and it culminated in the most stupendous strikes that ever took place among working men in Asia; Great Britain's reply to those strikes was to set armour-plated motor cars to work at Bombay.

The colonial question is therefore a question of paramount importance not only on the maps of the diplomatic congress in Paris but also in the colonies. Wilson's programme has for its object, at the best, to change the label of colonial slavery. No emancipation of the colonies is possible unless the working classes of the mother-country are emancipated. The workmen and peasants not only in Annam, Algiers, Bengal, but also in Persia and Armenia, will achieve their independence only in the hour, when the working men of England and France throw over Lloyd George and Clemenceau and take power into their own hands. In more advanced colonies, the struggle is not only being conducted under the banner of national emancipation, but it assumes, to a smaller or greater extent, the character of a purely social struggle. If capitalistic Europe forcibly involved the most backward parts of the world into the maelstrom of capitalistic interrelations, socialistic Europe is prepared to assist the emancipated colonies by its technics, by its organization, by its moral and intellectual influence, so as to facilitate their transition to properly organized socialistic husbandry.

Colonial slaves of Africa and Asia! When the hour of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Europe strikes, the hour of your liberation shall have come.

The whole of the bourgeois world accuses the communists of having destroyed freedom and political democracy. This is not true. In acceding to power, the proletariat merely recognizes the utter impossibility of applying the methods of bourgeois democracy, and creates the conditions and forms of a new and a higher democracy, that of the working classes. The whole course of capitalistic development, particularly in its last imperialistic period, had been sapping at the roots of political democracy; not only did it divide the nations into two hostile classes, but it also doomed to economic vegetation and political impotency the numerous proletarian and petty-bourgeois strata, as well as the most hapless lower strata of the proletariat itself.

In such countries where the course of historic development had rendered it practicable, the working classes had taken advantage of the regime of political democracy for the purpose of organizing themselves against capitalism. The same process will go on, wherever the conditions are not ripe yet for a revolution of labour. Vast intervening masses, however, are, both in the cities and in the villages, kept behind by the efforts of capitalism, and are therefore unable to keep up with the general progress of historical development.

The peasant of Bavaria or Baden, still faithfully clinging to his parish church-tower, the small vine-grower of France, ruined by the wholesale adulteration of wine carried on by large capitalists, the small American farmer, robbed and deceived by his bankers and his deputies, all the social strata shoved off by capitalism from the high road of development, are, on paper, but on paper only, called upon by the regime of political democracy to govern the state. As a matter of fact, however, in all essential questions determining the fate of nations, financial oligarchy takes its own decisions behind the back of parliamentary democracy. This was a fact in regard to the question of war, and it holds good now in regard to the question of peace. Inasmuch as financial oligarchy still troubles to sanction its deeds of violence by votes in parliament, the bourgeois state may achieve its ends by the time-honoured expedients of lies, demagoguery, instigations, slander, bribery and terror, inherited from past centuries of class slavery and multiplied by all the miracles of capitalistic technics.

To require that the proletariat should, in its last deadly struggle with capital, piously observe the dictates of political democracy, is as if one were to insist that a man defending his life against robbers should observe the artificial and purely conventional rules of French wrestling, which his opponent calmly ignores.

In this realm of destruction, where not only the means of production and of transport, but the very institutions of political democracy are but a heap of blood-stained ruins, the proletariat is called upon to create its own apparatus for maintaining the cohesion of the working masses and ensuring the possibility of their revolutionary interference in the subsequent development of mankind. That apparatus is provided by workers' councils (Soviets). The old parties, the old professional organizations (trade unions), as represented by their governing bodies, have proved utterly incapable not only of solving, but even of understanding, the problems set before them by the new era. The proletariat has created a new type of political organization, an apparatus broad enough to embrace the working masses irrespective of profession and of their degree of political maturity, an apparatus pliant enough and capable of constant renovation and expansion to such an extent as to draw within its sphere new strata of the population and gather within its fold those of the urban and rural workers as are most akin to the proletariat. This unique organization of labour, having for its object the self-government, the social struggle and the ultimate accession to power of the working classes, has been tried in a number of countries and is the most essential achievement and the most powerful weapon of the proletariat in modern times.

In all countries where the working masses realise their own interests, councils of workers, soldiers and peasants are being formed and shall be formed in the future. To strengthen these councils ("Soviets"), to uphold their authority, to oppose them to the state apparatus of the bourgeoisie, such at present is the most essential task of all honest and discriminating working men in all countries. The Soviets will keep the working classes from the dissolution brought into their midst by the horrors of war and famine, by the violence of the wealthy and the treachery of their late chiefs. The Soviets are the best and safest method for the working class to achieve power in all countries, where the Soviets will have gathered round them the majority of the working population. Through the intermediary of the Soviets, the working classes, when once they have acceded to power, will govern all the branches of the economic life of a country and all its culture, as this is already the case in Russia.

The breakdown of the imperialistic state, from tsardom down to "democracy," is simultaneous with the collapse of the imperialistic military system. The vast armies



mobilized by imperialism could only be kept together as long as the proletariat remained under the sway of the bourgeoisie. The downfall of national unity has inevitably resulted in the downfall of the army. This was the case in Russia, and later in Germany and Austria. The same is to be expected in other imperialistic countries. The rising of the peasant against his landlord, of the workman against the capitalist, of both against the monarchical or "democratic" bureaucracy, inevitably leads to the mutiny of soldiers against their commanding officers, and subsequently, to a sharp split between the proletarian and the middle-class portions of the army. The imperialistic war, which used to oppose a nation to a nation, is being superseded, and has partly been superseded by civil war, which opposes one class to another.

The denunciation of civil war and red terror by the middle classes is a piece of the most preposterous hypocrisy known in the history of political struggle. There would be no civil war if the cliques of slavedrivers, who have brought humanity to the brink of ruin, did not oppose every forward step of the working masses, if they did not organize plots and murders, if they did not call into the country armed forces from without for the purpose of retaining, or restoring, their privileges of robbery.

Civil war is being foisted upon the working classes by their deadly foes. The working classes cannot refrain from returning blow for blow, unless they forego their own interests and sacrifice their future—which is the future of mankind.

While they never artificially foster civil war, the communist parties strive to shorten its duration whenever it inexorably breaks out; they endeavor to reduce the number of its victims and, first of all, to ensure the victory of the proletariat. Hence the necessity of the timely disarmament of the middle classes, the arming of the working classes, the creation of a communistic army to defend the rule of the proletariat and the unhindered carrying out of the constructive programme of socialism. Thus the Red Army of Soviet Russia came into being. It is a bulwark for the conquests of the working classes against any assaults both from without and from within. The soviet army is an integral part of the Soviet state.

Fully realizing the universality of their objects, the advanced working men endeavored, from the very outset of the organized socialistic movement, to give it an international character. The movement originated in 1864, at the First International Congress, in London. The Franco-Prussian war, which gave birth to the Germany of the Hohenzollerns, while wrecking the First International, gave an impulse to the development of national labour parties. As early as 1889, those parties assembled in congress at Paris and created the Second International. The centre of gravity of the labour movement of those days rested, however, on a purely national foundation; it was carried on within the limits of the national state, on the basis of national industry, and it manifested itself through the medium of national parliaments. Decades of organizational and reformatory efforts created a generation of leaders who, while ostentatiously clinging to the programme of social revolution, did, as a matter of fact, disavow it and finally sank into the mire of gradual reforms and of a docile adaptability to the bourgeois state. The opportunism of the leading parties of the Second International was finally revealed and it led it the greatest catastrophe in the history of mankind, at a time when the course of historical events made it imperative for labour to have recourse to revolutionary methods. If the war of 1870 dealt a heavy blow to the First International in showing that its social and revolutionary programme was not backed by any closely united masses, the war of 1914 killed the Second International while it made clear that the powerful organizations of the working masses were headed by parties which had become obedient agents of the bourgeois state.

This holds true not only with regard to the social-patriots now openly siding with the bourgeoisie and turned into its favorite trusted agents and the most reliable executioners of the working classes, but also with regard to the flabby and unstable current of the socialistic

centre, which is endeavouring to restore the Second International, i.e. the narrow-mindedness, the opportunism and the revolutionary inefficiency of its leaders. The Independent party in Germany, the present socialist majority in France, the Mensheviks in Russia, the Independent Labour Party in England and all similar groups, are in fact trying to fill the place which, before the war, was occupied by the old official parties of the Second International; like those old parties, they advocate compromises and agreements, they paralyse by all the means within their power the energies of the proletariat, they defer the crucial moment of the struggle and thus intensify the hardships of Europe. A struggle with the socialist centre is a *conditio sine qua non* of the struggle with imperialism.

While we sweep away the half methods, the mendacity and the decrepitude of the degenerate official socialist parties, we, the communists of today, united under the auspices of the Third International, feel ourselves to be the direct successors of the heroic efforts and martyrdom of a long series of revolutionary generations, from Babeuf down to Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.

If the First International foresaw future developments and planned their course, if the Second International united and organised millions of proletarians, the Third International is the International of the open effort of the masses, the International of revolutionary achievement, the International of action.

Bourgeois order has been sufficiently castigated by socialist critics. The object of the international communist party is to overthrow that organization and to replace it by the socialist state. We call upon all the working men and women of all countries to rally round the communist banner already floating over many a victorious battlefield.

Proletarians of all countries! Rally for the struggle against imperialistic barbarism, against monarchy, against the privileged classes, against the bourgeois state and bourgeois property, against national oppression and the tyranny of classes in any shape or form!

Proletarians of all countries, rally round the banner of workers' councils, round the banner of the revolutionary struggle for power and the dictatorship of the proletariat, round the banner of the Third International!

On behalf of the Delegations:

of Germany	Max Albert
of Russia	N. Lenin
of German Austria	K. Gruber
of Hungary	A. Rudnianski
of Sweden	Otto Grimlund
of Switzerland	Fritz Platten
of America	B. Reinstein
of The Balkan Federation	G. Rakovski
of Poland	Unschlicht (Yurovski)
of Finland	I. Sirola
of The Ukraine	Skripnik
of Latvia	K. Gailiss
of Esthonia	G. Pegelman
of Armenia	Gaikuni
of German Colonies on the Volga	G. Klinger
of Peoples of Eastern Russia	Yalimoff
of The French Zimmerwald Left Wing	Henri Guilbeaux

*Communist International*, No. 1 (May, 1919), pp. 6-20, with minor modifications by the editor.

# RESOLUTION OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL ON THE ROLE OF WORKING WOMEN

March 6, 1919

*This short resolution, introduced by Alexandra Kollontai, reflects that the Russian revolutionaries had traditionally emphasized the emancipation of women and the role they would play in creating the new society. That it was not a high priority of the Bolshevik leaders at this time, however, is suggested not only by the brevity of this statement but also by the fact that at the Second Congress in 1920 action on women and youth, the "only remaining" agenda issues, was referred to the Executive Committee because of lack of time.*

## Resolution on the necessity of the co-operation of the proletarian women in the Communist parties.

The Congress of the Communist International recognizes that the realization of all the tasks it sets by itself, as well as the ultimate victory of the world proletariat and the complete abolishment of the capitalistic system, can be attained only by the closely united common effort of the men and women of the working class.

The enormously growing employment of female labour in all branches of economy, the fact that no less than half of all existing values are produced by womens' hand, the recognition of the important part proletarian women play in the construction of the new Communist social order, particularly in the transition to communistic domestic relations, in the reform of the family as an institution, and the realization of a socialistic education of children destined to produce able and common-spirited citizens for the Soviet Republics—all these considerations cause the following to be the urgent task of all parties adhering to the Communist International: to exert all their energy towards the winning of proletarian women for those parties, and towards the education of working women in the spirit of the new society and of communistic ethics in society and the family.

The dictatorship of the proletariat can be realized and kept up only through the active and energetic participation of the women of the working class.

*Communist International*, No. 1 (May, 1919), p. 127, with minor modifications by the editor.



## PROGRAM OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

March 22, 1919

*Lenin first called for revising the party program in the "April Theses" issued on his return to Russia in 1917. The question surfaced repeatedly afterward, and Lenin prepared various materials. Finally the Eighth Party Congress approved the first official restatement of the party's program since the revolution. It was designed as a general statement of principles and long-term objectives.*

## The Program of the All-Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)

The October Revolution of October 25 (November 7), 1917, realized the dictatorship of the proletariat, which assisted by poorest peasantry or semi-proletariat, began to lay the foundation of a communist society. The course of development of revolutions in Germany

and Austria-Hungary, the growth of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat in all advanced countries, the spreading of the Soviet form of this movement, that is, a form that is directed to the immediate realization of the dictatorship of the proletariat—all this proved that there had begun the era of a world-wide proletarian communist revolution.

This revolution was the inevitable outcome of the development of capitalism which still prevails in the majority of the civilized countries. Our old program, except for the incorrect designation of the party as the Social-Democratic Party, quite correctly characterizes the nature of capitalism and of bourgeois society in the following theses:

"The chief characteristic of such a (capitalist) society is the production of goods on the basis of capital, where the most important and the greatest part of the means of production and exchange belong to a numerically small class of people, while all the rest of the population consists of proletarians and semi-proletarians whose economic position compels them permanently or periodically to sell their labor power, i.e., to work for wages for capitalists and to create by their labor the income of the upper classes of society.

"The sphere of domination of the capitalist system of production extends more and more with the development of technical improvements which, increasing the economic importance of large enterprises, leads to the abolition of small independent manufacturers. Some of these are reduced to the state of proletarians; the part played by the remainder in social and economic life is greatly narrowed, and in some cases the small manufacturers are put into a more or less complete, more or less obvious and more or less burdensome dependence upon capital.

"The same technological progress, moreover, gives the capitalists the opportunity to apply in greater dimensions woman and child labor in production and circulation of goods. On the other hand, the development of technical improvements leads to a relative decrease in the demand for human labor on the part of the capitalists, and the supply of labor power exceeds the demand; therefore, the dependence of hired labor upon capital increases, and the degree of exploitation becomes higher.

"Such a state of affairs within bourgeois countries, together with the continual sharpening of their rivalries on the world market, makes the sale of goods, the production of which continually increases, more and more difficult. As a result of over-production industrial crises occur, which are followed by more or less lasting periods of industrial stagnation. Over-production is the inevitable outcome of the development of productive power in bourgeois society. Crises and the periods of industrial stagnation in their turn ruin the small manufacturers still more, increase the dependence of wage labor upon capital, lead more quickly to a relative and sometimes to an absolute deterioration of the conditions of the working class.

"Thus the improvement of technique, which means an increase in the productivity of labor and the growth of social wealth, in bourgeois society leads to the increase of social inequality, widens the gulf between the rich and the poor, and leads to increased insecurity of existence, unemployment and privation for broader and broader strata of the working masses.

"Just as all these contradictions which are inherent in bourgeois society, grow and develop, so the discontent of the working and the exploited masses with the existing state of things grows also. The number and the solidarity of the proletariat increases and its struggle with the exploiters becomes sharp. At the same time, the development of technique, as a result of which means of production and exchange are concentrated in a few hands and the process of labor in capitalist enterprises becomes more collective, more and more rapidly creates the opportunity for replacing the capitalist system of production by a communist system and for bringing about a social revolution, which is the final aim of the International Communist Party, the conscious expression of the class movement.

"Social revolution, replacing private property by social production and exchange, and introducing the systematic organization of production to secure the welfare and the development of all the members of society, will abolish the division of society into classes and

liberate all oppressed humanity. It will put an end to all kinds of exploitation of one section of society by the other.

"The necessary condition for a social revolution is the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., the proletariat must seize political power which will enable it to crush all resistance of the exploiters. The International Communist Party, the aim of which is to make the proletariat capable of fulfilling its great historic mission, organizes the proletariat into an independent political party which opposes all the bourgeois parties, leads the workers in the class struggle, reveals to the proletariat the irreconcilable difference of interests between exploiters and exploited and explains to the proletariat the historic significance and the essential conditions of the approaching social revolution. At the same time, the International Communist Party reveals to all the rest of the toiling and exploited masses the hopelessness of their condition in capitalist society and the necessity for a social revolution for their own liberation from the yoke of capital. The party of the working class, the Communist Party, calls to the toiling and to the exploited masses who have a proletarian point of view, to join its ranks."

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the process of concentration and centralization of capital, destroying free competition, led to the creation of great capitalist monopolies, syndicates, cartels, trusts—which dominated economic life. The same process brought about the amalgamation of bank capital with highly concentrated industrial capital, and to the increased exportation of capital abroad. The trusts, uniting whole groups of capitalist states, began the economic partition of the world, the territories of which had already been divided between the richest countries. This period of financial capital, in which the struggle between the capitalist countries inevitably grows sharper, is the period of imperialism.

Imperialist wars therefore become inevitable, wars for markets for the sale of goods, (wars) for spheres for investing capital, for raw material and for labor power, i.e., (wars) for world domination and for power over small and weak nations. Such was the nature of the first great imperialist war of 1914-1918.

The exceedingly high stage of development of world capitalism, the replacement of free competition by capitalist, state monopolies, the setting up by banks and also by groups of capitalists of an apparatus for the regulation of production and distribution, the resulting rise in cost of living, the pressure of the combinations on the working class and the oppression of the working class by the imperialist state, the tremendous difficulties for the proletariat to carry on an economic and political struggle, and all the horrors, misery and destruction which an imperialist war brings—all this makes the failure of capitalism and the transition to the higher type of public economy inevitable.

The bourgeois governments could finish the imperialist war neither by the conclusion of a just peace nor of any kind of stable peace. Capitalism has reached the point where an imperialist war must inevitably become transformed, and is becoming transformed, into a civil war between the exploited toiling masses, headed by the proletariat, against the bourgeoisie.

The increasing pressure of the proletariat, particularly its victories in individual countries, strengthens the resistance of the exploiters and compels them to create new forms of international capitalist solidarity (League of Nations, etc.), which by organizing the systematic exploitation of all peoples on a world scale, direct all their efforts to the immediate suppression of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat of all countries.

All this inevitably leads to the blending of civil war within individual countries with the defensive wars of revolutionary countries, and the struggles of oppressed nations against the yoke of imperialist powers.

Under such conditions, the watchwords of pacifism, international disarmament, courts of arbitration, etc., are not merely reactionary utopias, but deception of the toiling classes directed to the disarming of the proletariat and to diverting it from its own task of disarming the exploiters.

Only the proletarian communist revolution is able to lead humanity out of the blind alley which was created by the imperialists and imperialist wars. In spite of all the difficulties the revolution will have to face, temporary failures, waves of counter-revolution—the final victory of the proletariat is inevitable.

To attain the victory of the world proletarian revolution, the fullest confidence, the closest unity and co-ordination of all revolutionary activity of the working class in all advanced countries are necessary.

These conditions cannot be realized without a complete break with and bitter opposition to the bourgeois perversion of socialism which has obtained the upper hand in the higher circles of the official social-democratic and socialist parties.

One form of this perversion is the current of opportunism and social chauvinism—socialism in name, but chauvinism in fact, disguising the defense of the interests of the bourgeoisie under the false watchwords of defense of the fatherland, particularly during the imperialist war of 1914-1918. This current of opportunism is due to the opportunities created by the robbery of colonial and weak nations by advanced capitalist states; the surplus profits acquired therefrom by the bourgeoisie enables it to bribe the upper strata of the working class by placing them in a privileged position and guaranteeing them in time of peace a tolerable existence and taking their leaders into its service. The opportunists and the social-chauvinists are the servants of the bourgeoisie and the direct enemies of the proletariat, especially now, when together with the capitalists they are suppressing by armed force the revolutionary movement of the proletariat in their own and in foreign countries.

The other form of perversion is the so-called "Centre," which is also a bourgeois perversion of socialism. This current is observed in equal degrees in all capitalist countries, and fluctuates between social-chauvinists and communists, the latter striving to preserve unity with the former and trying to revive the bankrupt II International. The new III Communist International alone conducts the struggle of the proletariat for its emancipation, and the All-Russian Communist Party is one of its sections. This International was in fact created when the real proletarian elements of former socialist parties in different countries, particularly in Germany, formed communist parties, and was formally established in March 1919 at the first Congress in Moscow. The Communist International, which is more and more gaining the sympathies of the masses of the proletariat of all countries, not only in words but by deeds, by its political content and ideology returns to Marxism and realizes the revolutionary teaching of Marx, now cleansed of all bourgeois-opportunistic perversions.

The All-Russian Communist Party, developing the concrete aims of the dictatorship of the proletariat with reference to Russia, the chief characteristic of which is that the majority of the population consists of petty-bourgeois strata, defines these aims as follows:

#### General Politics

1. A bourgeois republic, even the most democratic, sanctified by such watchwords as "will of the people," "will of the nation," "no class privilege," remains in fact, owing to the existence of private property in land and other means of production, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, an instrument for exploitation and oppression of the broad masses of workers by a small group of capitalists. In opposition to this, proletarian or Soviet democracy transformed mass organizations precisely of the classes oppressed by capitalism, of proletarian and poorest peasantry or semi-proletarian, i.e., the vast majority of the population, into a single and permanent basis of the state apparatus, local and central. By this act, the Soviet State realized among other things local and regional autonomy without the appointment of authorities from above, on a much wider scale than is practised anywhere. The aim of the Party is to exert the greatest efforts in order to realize fully this highest type of democracy, which to function accurately requires a continually rising standard of culture, organization and activity on the part of the masses.

2. In contrast to bourgeois democracy, which concealed the class character of the state, the Soviet authority openly acknowledges that every state must inevitably bear a class character until the division of society into classes has been abolished and all government authority disappears. By its very nature, the Soviet state directs itself to the suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, and the Soviet constitution does not stop of depriving the exploiters of their political rights, bearing in mind that any kind of freedom is a deception if it is opposed to the emancipation of labor from the yoke of the capital. The aim of the Party of the proletariat consists in carrying on a determined suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, in struggling against the deeply rooted prejudices concerning the absolute character of bourgeois rights and freedom, and at the same time explaining that deprivation of political rights and any kind of limitation of freedom are necessary as temporary measures in order to defeat the attempts of the exploiters to retain or to reestablish their privileges. With the disappearance of the possibility of the exploitation of one human being by another, the necessity for these measures will also gradually disappear and the Party will aim to reduce and completely abolish them.

3. Bourgeois democracy has limited itself to formally extending political rights and freedom, such as the right of combination, freedom of speech, freedom of press, equality of citizenship. In practice, however, particularly in view of the economic slavery of the working masses, it was impossible for the workers to enjoy these rights and privileges to any great extent under bourgeois democracy.

Proletarian democracy on the contrary, instead of formally proclaiming those rights and freedoms, actually grants them first of all to those classes which have been oppressed by capitalism, i.e., to the proletariat and to the peasantry. For that purpose the Soviet state expropriates premises, printing offices, supplies of paper, etc., from the bourgeoisie, placing these at the disposal of the working masses and their organizations. The aim of the All-Russian Communist Party is to encourage the working masses to enjoy democratic rights and liberties, and to offer them every opportunity for doing so.

4. Bourgeois democracy through the ages proclaimed equality of persons, irrespective of religion, race or nationality and the equality of the sexes, but capitalism prevented the realization of this equality and in its imperialist stage developed race and national suppression. The Soviet Government, by being the authority of the toilers, for the first time in history could in all spheres of life realize this equality, destroying the last traces of woman's inequality in the sphere of marriage and the family. At the present moment the work of the Party is principally intellectual and educational with the aim of abolishing the last traces of former inequality and prejudices, especially among the backward sections of the proletariat and peasantry.

The Party's aim is not to limit itself to the formal proclamation of woman's equality, but to liberate woman from all the burdens of antiquated methods of housekeeping, by replacing them by house-communes, public kitchens, central laundries, nurseries, etc.

5. The Soviet Government, guaranteeing to the working masses incomparably more opportunities to vote and to recall their delegates in the most easy and accessible manner, than they possessed under bourgeois democracy and parliamentarism, at the same time abolishes all the negative features of parliamentarism, especially the separation of legislative and executive powers, the isolation of the representative institutions from the masses, etc.

In the Soviet state not a territorial district, but a productive unit (factory, mill) forms the electoral unit and the unit of the state. The state apparatus is thus brought near to the masses.

The aim of the Party consists in endeavoring to bring the Government apparatus into still closer contact with the masses, for the purpose of realizing democracy more fully and strictly in practice, by making Government officials responsible to, and placing them under the control of, the masses.

6. The Soviet state includes in its organs—the Soviets—workers and soldiers on a basis of complete equality and unity of interests whereas bourgeois democracy, in spite of all its declarations, transformed the army into an instrument of the wealthy classes, separated it from the masses, and set it against them, depriving the soldiers of any opportunity of exercising their political rights. The aim of the Party is to defend and develop this unity of the workers and soldiers in the Soviets and to strengthen the indissoluble ties between the armed forces and the organizations of the proletariat and semi-proletariat.

7. The urban industrial proletariat, being the more concentrated, united and educated section of the toiling masses, hardened in battle, played the part of leader in the whole Revolution. This was evidenced while the Soviets were being created, as well as in the course of development of the Soviets into organs of authority. Our Soviet Constitution reflects this in certain privileges it confers upon the industrial proletariat, in comparison with the more scattered petty-bourgeois masses in the village.

The All-Russian Communist Party, explaining the temporary character of these privileges, which are historically connected with difficulties of socialist organization of the village, must try undeviatingly and systematically to use this position of the industrial proletariat in order closer to unite the backward and the scattered masses of the village proletarians and semi-proletarians, as well as the middle-class peasantry, as a counter-balance to narrow craft professional interests, which were fostered by capitalism among the workers.

8. The proletarian revolution, owing to the Soviet organization of the state, was able at one stroke finally to destroy the old bourgeois, official and judicial state apparatus. The comparatively low standard of culture of the masses, the absence of necessary experience in state administration on the part of responsible workers who are elected by the masses, the pressing necessity, owing to the critical situation of engaging specialists of the old school, and the calling up to military service of the more advanced section of city workmen, all this led to the partial revival of bureaucratic practices within the Soviet system.

The All-Russian Communist Party, carrying on a resolute struggle with bureaucratism, suggests the following measures for overcoming this evil:

(1) Every member of the Soviet is obliged to perform a certain duty in state administration.

(2) These duties must change in rotation, so as gradually to embrace all the branches of administrative work.

(3) All the working masses without exception must be gradually induced to take part in the work of state administration.

The complete realization of these measures will carry us in advance of the Paris Commune, and the simplification of the work of administration, together with the raising of the level of culture of the masses, will eventually lead to the abolition of state authority.

#### Relations of Nationalities

9. With reference to the nationality question the All-Russian Communist Party is guided by the following theses:

(1) The principal aim is to bring into closer relations the proletarians and semi-proletarians of different nationalities, for the purpose of carrying on a general revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the landlords and the bourgeoisie.

(2) In order to remove mistrust on the part of the working masses of the oppressed countries toward the proletariat of those states which formerly oppressed them, it is necessary to abolish all privileges of any national group, to proclaim the fullest equality of all nationalities and to recognize the rights of colonies and oppressed nations to political separation.

(3) For the same purpose, as a temporary measure toward achieving the unity of nations, the Party suggests a federative combination of all states organized on the Soviet basis.



(4) The All-Russian Communist Party regards the question as to which class expresses the desire of a nation for separation, from a historical point of view, taking into consideration the level of historical development of the nation, i.e., whether the nation is passing from medievalism toward bourgeois democracy or from bourgeois democracy toward Soviet or proletarian democracy etc.

In any case, particular care and attention must be exercised by the proletariat of those nations which were oppressing nations, toward the prevailing national feelings of the working masses of the oppressed nations, or nations which are limited in their rights. Only by such a policy is it possible to create favorable conditions for a voluntary and real unity of different national elements of the international proletariat, as has been proved by the combination of different national Soviet republics around Soviet Russia.

#### Military Affairs

10. The aims of the Party with reference to military matters are defined by the following fundamental theses:

(1) In the period when imperialism is decaying and civil war is spreading, it is possible neither to retain the old army nor to construct a new one on a so-called national and non-class basis. The Red Army, as the instrument of the proletarian dictatorship, is compelled to have an undisguised class character, i.e., its ranks must be filled exclusively with proletarians and semi-proletarian sections of the peasantry. Only with the abolition of classes will this kind of army be transformed into national socialist militia.

(2) All proletarians and semi-proletarians must undergo thorough courses of military training. Military training must be introduced into the schools.

(3) The work of military training and of education of the Red Army is conducted on the basis of class solidarity and socialist education. Therefore, political commissars chosen from devoted and trustworthy communists are as necessary as military chiefs, and communist groups must be organized in all sections of the army, in order to establish class conscious discipline and an intellectual link with the Party.

(4) As a counter-balance to the old order of things in the army, the following changes are necessary: shorter periods of barrack training, barracks to be nearer to the type of military and military-political schools, closer connection between military formations and mills, factories, trade unions and organizations of the poorest peasantry.

(5) Only commanding corps of which at first at least the lower ranks are drawn from among class-conscious workers and peasants, can give the necessary organization and stability to the young revolutionary army. Therefore, one of the principal aims in the construction of the army is the training of the most energetic and capable soldiers devoted to the cause of socialism, for the duties of commanders.

(6) It is necessary to make use of, and adopt on a wide scale, the practical and technical experience of the last world war. In connection with this it is necessary to attract military specialists who have gone through the training of the old army, for the organization of the army and for conducting military operations. At the same time this use of military specialists may be made on condition that political guidance and full control over military officials is concentrated in the hands of the working class.

(7) The demand that the commanding corps should be elective had great significance with reference to the bourgeois army where the military commanders were selected and trained to become an instrument of class oppression of soldiers, and through them of the working masses. This demand has no significance with reference to the Red Army, composed of class-conscious workers and peasants. The possibility of combining the election and appointment of the commanders of the revolutionary class army is determined exclusively by practical considerations, and depends upon the standard of organization attained, the degree of solidarity of the parts of the army, the effective supply of commanders, etc.

### Jurisprudence

11. Proletarian democracy, taking power into its own hands and finally abolishing the organs of domination of the bourgeoisie—the former courts of justice—has replaced the formula of bourgeois democracy: “judges elected by the people” by the class watchword: “judges elected from the working masses and only by the working masses,” and has applied the latter in the organization of law courts, having extended equal rights to both sexes, both in the election of judges and in the exercise of the functions of judges.

In order to induce the broad masses of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry to take part in the administration of justice, a bench of jury-judges sitting in rotation under guidance of a permanent judge is introduced and various labor organizations and trade unions must impanel their delegates.

The Soviet Government has replaced the former endless series of courts of justice with their various divisions, by a very simplified, uniform system of Peoples' Courts, accessible to the population, and freed of all useless formalities of procedure.

The Soviet Government, abolishing all the laws of the overthrown Governments, commissioned the judges elected by the Soviets to carry out the will of the proletariat in compliance with its decrees, and in cases of absence or incompleteness of decrees, to be guided by socialist conscience.

Constructed on such a basis, the courts of justice have already led to a fundamental alteration of the character of punishment, introducing conditional sentences on a wide scale, applying public censure as a form of punishment by obligatory labor with the retention of freedom, and prisons by institutions for training, and applying the principle of comradely tribunals.

The All-Russian Communist Party, in order to assist the further development of the courts of justice on these lines, will strive to induce all workers without exception to perform judicial duties and finally replace the system of punishment by measures of an educational character.

### Public Education

12. The All-Russian Communist Party in the field of education sets itself the task of bringing to fulfillment the work begun by the October Revolution of 1917, of transforming the school from an instrument of class domination of the bourgeoisie into an instrument for the abolition of the class divisions of society, into an instrument for a communist regeneration of society.

In the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., in the period of preparation of conditions suitable for the realization of communism, the school must be not only the conductor of communist principles, but it must become the conductor of the intellectual, organizational and educational influences of the proletariat, to the semi-proletariat and non-proletarian sections of the toiling masses, in order to educate a generation capable of establishing communism. The immediate aim in this direction is at the present time the further development of the following principles of school and educational work, already established by the Soviet Government:

(1) The introduction of free and compulsory general and technical education (instruction in the theory and practice of the principal branches of production) for all children of both sexes up to the age of 17.

(2) The establishment of a system of pre-school institutions: nurseries, kindergartens, homes, etc., to improve the social development of women and assist in their emancipation.

(3) Full realization of the principle of a uniform industrial school with instruction in the native language, with co-education for children of both sexes, free from religious influence; a school where tuition is closely connected with socially useful labor and which prepares members of a communist society.

(4) The supply of all pupils with food, clothes, boots and school appliances at the cost of the state.

(5) The preparation of a new staff of teachers who are imbued with the ideas of communism.

(6) Bringing the toiling masses to take an active part in educational work (the development of councils of public education, mobilization of educated people, etc.).

(7) General state assistance to self-education and the intellectual development of workers and peasants (creation of a system of institutions for education outside of the schools, such as libraries, schools for adults, people's palaces and universities, courses of lectures, cinemas, studios, etc.).

(8) Spreading on a large scale of professional education for persons from the age of 17, in connection with technical knowledge.

(9) Making all universities accessible to all desiring to study, particularly to workers; attracting all people able to lecture to become instructors in these universities; abolishing all artificial barriers standing in the way of young scientists reaching professional chairs; financial support of students in order to offer the proletarians and the peasants the fullest opportunity to take advantage of the universities.

(10) Opening and making accessible to the toiling classes all the art treasures which were created by the exploitation of their labor, and which were formerly at the exclusive disposal of the exploiters.

(11) The development of the propaganda of communist ideas on a wide scale and for that purpose the utilization of state resources and apparatus.

#### Religion

13. With reference to religion, the All-Russian Communist Party does not content itself with the already decreed separation of church from state, i.e., measures which are one of the items of the programs of bourgeois democracy, which was, however, never fulfilled owing to many and various ties binding capital with religious propaganda.

The All-Russian Communist Party is guided by the conviction that only the realization of conscious and systematic social and economic activity of the masses will lead to the disappearance of religious prejudices. The aim of the Party is finally to destroy the ties between the exploiting classes and the organization of religious propaganda, at the same time helping the toiling masses actually to liberate their minds from religious superstitions, and organizing on a wide scale scientific-educational and anti-religious propaganda. It is however, necessary carefully to avoid offending the religious susceptibilities of believers, which leads only to the strengthening of religious fanaticism.

#### Economics

1. Undeviatingly to continue and finally to realize the expropriation of the bourgeoisie which was begun and which has already been largely completed, the transforming of all means of production and exchange into the property of the Soviet republic, i.e., the common property of all toilers.

2. All possible increase of the productive forces of the country must be considered the fundamental and principal point upon which the economic policy of the Soviet Government is based. In view of the disorganization of the country, everything in other spheres of life must be subordinated to the practical aim immediately and at all costs to increase the quantity of products required by the population. The successful functioning of every Soviet institution connected with public economy must be gauged by the practical results in this direction.

At the same time it is necessary in the first place to pay attention to the following:

3. The decaying imperialist system of economy left to the Soviet state a heritage of chaos in the organization and management of production, which hampered it in the first period of construction. The more imperative therefore becomes the fundamental task of concentrating all the economic activity of the country according to a general state plan; the greatest

concentration of production for the purpose of amalgamating it into various branches and groups of branches, and centralizing it in the most productive units, and for the purpose of rapidity in carrying out economic achievements; the most efficient arrangement of the productive apparatus and a rational and economical utilization of all material resources of the country.

It is necessary to extend economic co-operation and political ties with other nations, and try at the same time to establish a general economic plan with those which have already adopted the Soviet system.

4. It is necessary to utilize small-scale and handicraft industry to the widest extent by placing Government orders with handicraftsmen; to include handicraft and small-scale industry in the general scheme of supplying raw materials and fuel, as well as financial assistance, on condition that individual handicraftsmen, handicraft associations, productive co-operative societies and small enterprises amalgamate into large productive and industrial units; to encourage such amalgamations by offering them economic privileges, which together with other measures are aimed at defeating the aspirations of the handicraftsmen to become small manufacturers, and thus painlessly replace the backward forms of production by a higher form of large-scale mechanized industry.

5. The organizing apparatus of socialized industry must first of all rest upon the trade unions. The latter must free themselves from their narrow guild outlook and transform themselves into large productive combinations which will unite the majority, and finally all the workers of a given branch of production.

Trade unions, being already according to the laws of the Soviet Republic and established practice participants in all local and central organs for managing industry, must actually concentrate in their hands the management of the whole system of public economy as a economic unit. The trade unions, thus securing an indissoluble union between the central state administration, the public system of economy and the masses of toilers must induce the latter to take part in the immediate management of production. The participation of trade unions in the management of production and the attraction by them of the broad masses are, moreover, the principal means to carry on a struggle against bureaucracy in the economic apparatus of the Soviet state, and afford the opportunity of establishing a really democratic control over the results of production.

6. A maximum utilization of all labor power existing in the state, its regular distribution and redistribution among various territorial regions as well as among various branches of production, is necessary for the systematic development of public economy, and must be the immediate aim in the economic policy of the Soviet Government. This aim can be attained in closest co-operation with the trade unions. For the purpose of performing certain social duties, a general mobilization of all capable of work must be carried out by the Soviet Government, aided by the trade unions, on a much wider scale and more systematically than has been done hitherto.

7. In the state of the complete disorganization of the capitalist system of labor, the productive forces of the country can be restored and developed, and a socialist system of production strengthened, only on the basis of the comradely discipline of toilers, maximum activity on their part, responsibility and the strictest mutual control over the productivity of labor.

Persistent systematic effort directed to the re-education of the masses is necessary to attain this aim. This work is now made easier as the masses in reality see the abolition of capitalists, landowners, and merchants, and from their own experience draw the conclusion that the level of their prosperity depends entirely upon the productivity of their own labor.

The trade unions play the principal part in the work of establishing a new socialist discipline. Breaking with old conventions, they must put into practice and try various measures, such as the establishment of control, standards of production, the introduction of

responsibility of the workers before special labor tribunals, etc., for the realization of this aim.

8. Moreover, for the development of the productive forces the immediate wide and full utilization of all specialists in science and technology left to us by capitalism, is necessary, in spite of the fact that the majority of the latter are inevitably imbued with bourgeois ideas and habits. The Party considers that the period of sharp struggle with this group, owing to organized sabotage on their part, is ended as the sabotage is in the main subdued. The Party, in closest contact with the trade unions, will follow its former line of action, i.e., on the one hand it will make no political concessions to this bourgeois section and mercilessly suppress any counter-revolutionary moves on its part, and on the other hand it will carry on a merciless struggle against the pseudo-radical, but in reality, ignorant and conceited opinion that the working class can overcome capitalism and the bourgeois order without the aid of bourgeois specialists or taking advantage of their knowledge, without passing, together with them, through a thorough schooling of hard work.

While striving toward equal remuneration of labor and to realize communism, the Soviet Government does not regard the immediate realization of such equality possible at the moment, when only the first steps are being taken towards replacing capitalism by communism. It is therefore necessary to maintain a higher remuneration for specialists in order that they should work not worse but better than before, and for that purpose it is not possible to abandon the system of bonuses for the most successful, particularly for work of organization.

To the same degree, it is necessary to place the bourgeois experts in a setting of comradely common effort, working hand in hand with the mass of average workers, led by class conscious communists, and thus to assist the mutual understanding and unity between manual and intellectual workers formerly separated by capitalism.

9. The Soviet authority has already adopted a number of measures directed to the development of science and for bringing it into closer contact with production, viz.: the creation of a number of new scientific institutions, laboratories, stations for research and experimental production, in order to verify new technical methods, improvements and inventions, taking stock of and organizing all scientific forces. The All-Russian Communist Party, supporting all these measures, strives to attain their further development and to create more favorable conditions for scientific work in connection with the increase of the productive forces of the country.

#### Agriculture, Rural Economy

10. The Soviet Government, having carried out the complete abolition of private property in land, has already begun to carry out a series of measures directed to the organization of socialist agriculture on a wide scale. The principal measures are the following: (1) The establishment of Soviet farms, i.e., large socialist economic enterprises; (2) Assistance to societies as well as associations for common land cultivation; (3) Organization by the state of the cultivation of all uncultivated acreage; (4) State mobilization of all agricultural forces for the purpose of taking the most energetic measures to increase agricultural productivity; (5) The support of agricultural communes as absolutely voluntary associations of agricultural laborers for the purpose of conducting a communal system of economy on a large scale.

The All-Russian Communist Party, considering all these measures as the only way toward the absolutely indispensable increase of productivity of agricultural labor, strives to extend them to the more backward regions of the country, and as further steps in this direction the All-Russian Communist Party particularly supports:

(1) All possible encouragement by the state of agricultural co-operative societies engaged in the processing of agricultural products.

(2) The introduction of a system of melioration on a wide scale.

(3) The systematic supply on a wide scale of agricultural implements through special establishments, to the poorest and the middle-class peasantry.

The All-Russian Communist Party, taking into consideration that the small scale system of agriculture will continue for a considerable time, strives to carry out a series of measures directed to the increase of productivity of the peasant enterprise. The measures are: (1) The regulation of the exploitation of land by the peasants (abolition of scattered fields, etc.); (2) The supply to the peasantry of improved seeds and artificial manure; (3) The improvement of the breed of cattle; (4) The dissemination of agricultural information; (5) Agricultural aid to the peasantry; (6) The repair of peasants' agricultural implements in Soviet workshops; (7) The establishment of loan centers, experimental stations, exhibition-fields, etc.; (8) The improvement of peasant lands.

11. The opposition between the town and the village is one of the chief causes of the economic and cultural backwardness of the village. In periods of serious crisis, such as the present, this opposition places the town as well as the village before the immediate danger of degeneration and destruction. The All-Russian Communist Party sees in the abolition of this opposition one of the principal tasks of communist construction, and among other measures considers essential the systematic attraction of industrial workmen to communist construction in agriculture, and greater activity on the part of the already established "Workers' Committees of Assistance," etc.

12. The All-Russian Communist Party in its work in the village, as formerly, looks for support to the proletarian and semi-proletarian groups in it, and in the first place organizes these into an independent force, creating Party circles in the village, organizations of the rural poor, special types of trade unions of village proletarians and semi-proletarians, and so on, bringing them into closer contact with the urban proletarians, freeing them from the influence of the rural bourgeoisie and the interests of small property-holders.

The relation of the All-Russian Communist Party to the rural bourgeois elements is one of carrying on a resolute struggle against their attempts at exploitation, and suppressing their resistance to the Soviet policy.

The policy of the All-Russian Communist Party with reference to the middle-class peasantry consists in gradually and systematically attracting it to the work of socialist construction. The Party's aim is to separate this section from the kulaks (rich peasants), by giving consideration to its needs, to bring it over to the side of the proletariat, to struggle against its backwardness by means of suppression, in all cases where the vital interests of this section are involved to come to an agreement with it, making concessions to it on questions related to methods of realizing socialist reorganization.

#### Distribution

13. In the field of distribution, the task of the Soviet Government at the present time is undeviatingly to replace private trade by a systematic distribution of products on a national scale. The aim is to organize the population into a single network of consumers' communes, which will be able with the greatest rapidity, systematically, economically and with the least expenditure of labor, to distribute all necessary products, strictly centralizing the whole apparatus for distribution.

The already existing general and workers' co-operative societies, which are the largest organizations of consumers and which the development of capitalism has made a most efficient apparatus for distribution on a large scale, will become the basis of the communes of consumers and their groupings.

The All-Russian Communist Party, considering more correct on principle the further communist development of the co-operative apparatus and not its abolition, must systematically continue its policy: to make the work in co-operative societies obligatory for all members of the Party, to conduct them with the aid of trade unions on a communist basis, to develop among the workers in co-operative societies initiative and discipline, to strive toward the aim that the whole population belong to co-operative societies, combined into one co-operative embracing all Soviet Russia and finally—and most essential—to see that the influence of the proletariat on other groups of toilers should always prevail, and introduce

measures facilitating and realizing the transformation of petty-bourgeois co-operatives of the old capitalist type into communes of consumers conducted by the proletariat and semi-proletariat.

### Money and Banking

14. The Soviet Government in Russia, avoiding the mistakes of the Paris Commune, immediately expropriated the State Bank, then proceeded to the nationalization of private commercial banks and combined the nationalized banks and saving banks with the State Bank, thus laying the foundation of a single national bank of the Soviet Republic and transforming the banks from an instrument of economic domination of financial capital and of the political domination of exploiters, into an organ of power of the workers, and a lever of economic revolution. The All-Russian Communist Party considers its aim to be the final accomplishment of the work begun by the Soviet Government and regards the following principles as paramount:

(1) The monopolization of all banking by the Soviet State.

(2) A complete alteration and simplification of bank transactions by transforming the banks into an apparatus for uniform accounting and general bookkeeping of the Soviet Republic. The organization of a systematic public economy will lead to the abolition of the bank and to the transformation of it into a central bookkeeping department of the communist society.

15. In the first period of transition from capitalism to communism, while communist production and distribution of products is not yet organized, it is impossible to abolish money. Under such conditions the bourgeois sections of society are able to utilize money, which still remains private property, for the purpose of speculation, profiteering and robbery of the toilers. The All-Russian Communist Party strives toward the adoption of a series of measures which will render it possible to extend the field of operations without the aid of money and which will lead to the abolition of money, such as the compulsory depositing of money in the public bank; the introduction of budget books; the replacing of money by checks, short-term tickets for procuring products, and so on.

### Finance

16. In the period of the beginning of the socialization of the means of production expropriated from the capitalists, the state ceases to be a parasitic apparatus ruling the process of production: it begins to become transformed into an organization performing the function of managing the economic system of the country, and to that extent the state budget becomes the budget of public economy as a whole.

Under such circumstances the balancing of state revenues and expenditures can be realized on the condition that state production and distribution of products are arranged in the most efficient manner. The All-Russian Communist Party will reference to the covering of immediate state expenditure in the period of transition, defends the transition from the system of levies imposed on the capitalists which was historically necessary and legal in the period of social revolution, to the progressive income and property tax. As this tax becomes obsolete, owing to the general expropriation of the propertied class, state expenditure must be met by the direct conversion of a part of the income derived from the various state monopolies, into state revenue.

### Housing

17. The Soviet Government, in trying to solve the housing problem which was particularly sharpened during the war, has expropriated completely all the houses of capitalist owners, and handed them over to the municipal Soviets; has removed in mass the workers from the suburbs into bourgeois houses; handed over the best houses to the workers' organization, undertaking the maintenance of these at the expense of the State; and has arranged for the supply of furniture to workers' families.

The aim of the All-Russian Communist Party is to exert the greatest effort for the improvement of the house conditions of the toiling masses without infringing on the interests of non-capitalist home-ownership; the abolition of over-crowding in unsanitary quarters; the abolition of inadequate housing, the rebuilding of old and the building of new houses which will be in conformity with the new conditions of life of the working masses, and the rational resettlement of the working masses.

#### Protection of Labor and Social Security

The establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat for the first time made it possible to realize fully the minimum program of all socialist parties in the sphere of the protection of labor.

The Soviet Government has introduced by legislative enactment and ratified in the "Code of Labor Laws" a maximum eight-hour day for all workers, and a six-hour day for persons under 18 years of age and those working in unhealthy branches of production, and for miners; a 42-hour uninterrupted rest every week for all toilers; the prohibition of continuous overtime; the prohibition of employment of young persons under 16; the prohibition of night work, particularly in harmful branches of production, for all women and males under 18; the exemption from work of pregnant women 8 weeks before and 8 weeks after confinement, with the maintenance of full wages together with free medical assistance and medicine; permission to working women of not less than half an hour every 3 hours for nursing their babies, and supplementary subsidies to all nursing mothers; factory and sanitary inspection elected by the trade union councils.

The Soviet Government by legislative enactment has introduced complete social maintenance of all workers not exploiting the labor of others, and in all cases of loss of capacity for work, and for the first time in the world has introduced unemployment insurance of workers at the cost of employers and of the state, granting complete self-administration to those who are maintained and with the participation of trade unions.

Moreover, the Soviet Government in some respects has gone further than the minimum program and provided in the same "Code of Labor Laws" for the participation of the workers' organizations in the discussion of questions referring to the hiring and discharging of workers; a month's holiday for all workers who have worked continually for not less than a year, with the maintenance of wages; the state regulation of wages according to rates worked out by trade unions; the duty of certain organs such as the Soviet and trade union departments for the distribution and regulation of labor power, to provide work for unemployed workers.

The extreme destruction caused by the war and the pressure of world imperialism have compelled the Soviet Government to depart from the code in the following instances: to allow overtime in exceptional cases, but not exceeding 50 days in the course of one year; to permit youths between 14 and 16 to work, but the length of their working day not to exceed 4 hours; temporarily to reduce holidays from a month to a fortnight; to increase the hours of night work to 7.

The All-Russian Communist Party must carry on an extensive propaganda for the participation of all workers in the realization of all these measures for the protection of labor, for which purpose it is necessary.

(1) To make the work of organization and extension of labor inspection more intensive by choosing and preparing for that purpose active workers from among the workers and to extend inspection to small-scale and home industry.

(2) To abolish completely child labor and further to decrease the working hours for young persons.

In addition the All-Russian Communist Party's task is to establish:

(1) With the general increase of productivity of labor the six-hour working day as a maximum without reduction of wages, but on condition that all workers must devote two



hours' over-time without pay to the study of the theory of trade and industry, to practical training for state administration and to military drill.

(2) The introduction of the premium bonus system for the increase of labor productivity.

The All-Russian Communist Party in the sphere of social security strives to organize on a large scale the state support not only of war victims and victims of various catastrophes, but the victims of abnormal social relations. The Party also conducts a struggle against parasitism and idleness and sets itself the task of bringing back to a life of work any who have been dislodged from work.

### Protection of Public Health

The All-Russian Communist Party proposes as the starting point in its work for the protection of public health, the realization of sanitary measures on a large scale for the purpose of preventing the spreading of disease. The dictatorship of the proletariat has already made it possible to carry out a series of measures, the realization of which was impossible in bourgeois society; the nationalization of drug stores, of large private medical institutions, of health resorts, compulsory work for all medical men and women, and so on.

In conformity with the above the All-Russian Communist Party sets as its immediate task:

(1) To carry out in the interests of the toilers, sanitary measures on a large scale, such as:

- (a) Sanitation of centers of population (guarding of soil, water and air).
- (b) Setting up communal feeding on a scientific and hygienic basis.
- (c) The organization of measures preventing the development and spreading of infectious diseases.
- (d) The introduction of sanitary legislation.

(2) The struggle with social diseases (consumption, venereal diseases, alcoholism, etc.).

(3) Free trained medical assistance and medical supplies accessible to all.

Meisel and Kozera, pp. 100-121.



## PARTY ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

March 22, 1919

*The party rules and organization had not been changed officially since the revolution drastically affected the nature and role of the party; indeed, some parts still went back to 1903. Already by 1918 criticism of the inefficient operation of the central party apparatus emerged, and in 1919 the party began to address this problem. In doing so it defined the roles of certain party organizations and practices that have lasted since that time, as well as some ongoing problems. Among the latter are the references to problems of maintaining proper party-soviet relations, keeping party members in contact with the masses (especially workers), and of weeding out careerists. This document also reasserts the principle of central authority, and that party organization along nationality or vocational lines would not be allowed. Especially important is the formal establishment of three internal party organizations of tremendous and lasting importance: the Politburo, the Orgburo (until 1952) and the Secretariat. The modernization of the party organization was to be continued at the Eight Party Conference in December (see the party rules, below, December 4, 1919).*

## ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTION

## A. PARTY CONSTRUCTION

*1 Growth of the party*

Numerical growth of the party is progressive only to the extent that healthy proletarian elements of town and countryside are brought into the party. The party's door should be opened wide to workers and to worker and peasant youth. But the party must constantly follow with care the changes occurring in its social composition. All party organizations are under orders to keep careful track of their composition and to report on it periodically to the Central Committee. Expansion of the numerical base of party organizations must in no case be conducted at the cost of worsening their qualitative composition. Great care must be exercised in admitting non-worker and non-peasant elements to the party.

The Congress resolves to conduct a general registration of all party members throughout the whole of Russia by 1 May. The Central Committee is instructed to publish not later than 10 April, detailed instructions on the implementation of the re-registration in such a way that particular control measures are applied to those party members who joined the party ranks after October 1917.

*2 Ties with the masses*

It is natural for the Russian Communist Party, as the party that is in power and that holds the entire Soviet apparatus in its hands, to have assigned tens of thousands of its members to the task of running the country. A most important task of the party at the present moment is to enlist new thousands of its best people in the network of state management (the railroads, food, supervision, the army, the courts, etc.).

However, in connection with the carrying out of this urgent task there arose a serious danger. Many of the party members assigned to these state tasks are becoming cut off from the masses to a considerable extent and are becoming infected with bureaucratism; very often the same is true of many of the staff and members of the soviets. Immediate steps must be taken to wage a most resolute struggle against this abuse. Communists who are members of soviets must be ordered to report back to their constituents not less than once every two weeks, without fail. Workers who have been engaged exclusively in the work of the soviets for more than three months running are to be returned to the factories for at least one month. All staff workers of the soviets who are party members are obliged to conduct some sort of party work in their district. All Communists are ordered to become members of trade unions and to attend their general meetings.

*3 The Central Committee and the local organizations*

The Central Committee is made up of nineteen members (eight candidate members). Not less than once every three months the Central Committee convenes a party conference of representatives of guberniia and capital [Moscow and Petrograd] committees. These conferences discuss the most important current questions confronting the party.

Not less than once a month the Central Committee is to distribute to the guberniia and capital party committees a written report on its work. Matters that require widespread dissemination are to be printed in the newspapers every two weeks, conditions permitting.

A special travelling collegium of party instructors made up of party workers who hold responsible positions is to be set up under the Central Committee.

Local organizations are ordered to submit written reports on their activities not less than once every two months—the uezd committees reporting to the guberniia committees, and the guberniia committees reporting to the Central Committee.

All party and soviet press organs must include a section entitled, 'From Party Life.'

The Central Committee is instructed to take energetic measures to assure that all party organizations are provided sufficient financial resources for necessary party work.

#### 4 *The internal structure of the Central Committee*

The Central Committee holds no less than two plenums a month on days determined in advance. All of the more important political and organizational questions that do not require extremely urgent handling are to be discussed at these plenary meetings of the Central Committee.

The Central Committee is to set up, first, a *Political Bureau* [Politburo]; second, an *Organizational Bureau* [Orgburo], and third, a *Secretariat*.

The Politburo is composed of five members of the Central Committee. All other members of the Central Committee who have the opportunity to participate in one or another meeting of the Politburo enjoy the right of a consultative vote in the Politburo. The Politburo adopts decisions on questions requiring immediate action, and reports on all its work for the two-week period in question to the regular, periodic plenary session of the Central Committee.

The Orgburo is composed of five members of the Central Committee. Each member of the Orgburo heads up a corresponding segment of the work. The Orgburo meets not less than three times a week. The Orgburo directs all the party's organizational work. The Orgburo reports on its work to the Central Committee plenum every two weeks.

The Secretariat of the Central Committee is composed of one responsible secretary, who is a member of the Central Committee's Orgburo, and of five technical secretaries from among experienced party workers. The Secretariat organizes a number of departments. The Secretariat reports on its work to the Central Committee plenum every two weeks.

#### 5 *National organizations*

At the present time, the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, and Belorussia exist as separate Soviet republics. That is the present solution to the question of the forms of the *state's* existence.

But this in no sense means that the RKP(b) must, in turn, organize itself as a federation of independent communist parties.

The VIII Congress of the RKP resolves that it is necessary that there exist a *single*, centralized Communist Party with a single Central Committee that directs all the party's work in all parts of the Russian republic. All decisions of the RKP and of its directing institutions are unconditionally binding for all elements of the party, regardless of their national composition. The central committees of the Ukrainian, Latvian, and Lithuanian communists enjoy the rights of oblast party committees and are entirely subordinated to the Central Committee of the RKP.

#### 6 *The existence of special organizations*

The existence of special party organizations for the railroads, post and telegraph, the military, etc., is superfluous, and therefore the Central Committee, in co-ordination with local organizations, is to liquidate gradually such organizations, dissolving them in the general communist organization.

#### 7 *Centralism and discipline*

The situation of the party is such that the strictest centralism and the most severe discipline are an absolute necessity. All decisions of higher echelons are absolutely binding for those below. Every resolution must first be carried out, and only then is it permissible to appeal the resolution to the appropriate party body. In this sense regular military discipline is necessary for the party in the present era. All party undertakings susceptible of centralization (publishing, propaganda, etc.) must be centralized for effectiveness.

All conflicts are resolved by the appropriate higher party echelon.

#### 8 *Distribution of party forces*

The correct distribution of party forces at the present time is a major guarantee of success and one of our most important tasks. The entire question of the distribution of party workers is in the hands of the party Central Committee. The Central Committee's decisions are

binding for all. In each guberniia the guberniia party forces are assigned by the guberniia party committee, and in the capital cities, by the city party committees under the overall direction of the Central Committee. The Central Committee is instructed to conduct a most resolute struggle against all manner of localist sentiment and separatism in these matters.

The Central Committee is instructed to regularly re-assign party workers from one sphere of work to another and from one area to another for maximum efficiency.

#### *9 The training of party workers*

The Central Committee is instructed: 1) to organize a higher party school attached to the Central Committee; 2) to work out a general program and plan of studies at local party schools; 3) to assist local party schools by supplying them with lecturers, as appropriate.

#### *10 Izvestiia of the Central Committee*

The Central Committee is instructed to arrange for the weekly publication of *Izvestiia tsentral' nogo komiteta* devoted entirely to party life. [This *Izvestiia* should not be confused with the newspaper usually called *Izvestiia*, the organ of the soviets, which has existed from 1917 to the present.]

#### *11 Party Rules*

The Congress instructs the Central Committee to indicate, on the basis of materials received from various localities, a number of necessary changes in the Rules. These changes are to be confirmed by the next party conference to be called by the Central Committee.

All materials of an organizational nature that have been received by the organizational section are also to be given to the Central Committee for processing.

### B. SOVIET CONSTRUCTION

#### *1 Composition of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee*

The Congress considers that the make-up of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee should be changed in the sense that members of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee should be recruited primarily from among local officials engaged in regular work among the masses of peasants and workers.

#### *2 The Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee*

The functions of the presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee are not elaborated in the Soviet constitution. At the next congress of soviets it is necessary, on an urgent basis and on the basis of all practical experience, to formulate the rights and responsibilities of the presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and to delimit the sphere of its functions from those of the Sovnarkom.

#### *3 The soviets and executive committees*

All fundamental problems of local life and of the life of the country in general should, as far as possible, be posed and solved at the general meetings of the soviets. It is necessary to combat the tendency to transfer the resolution of all questions to the executive committees exclusively. The soviets must function not merely as an apparatus for agitation and information, but also as a well-regulated mechanism for dealing with substantive issues.

#### *4 The enlistment of all workers in the soviets*

Not just the representatives of the industrial proletariat, but representatives of toilers in general (see the Constitution of the Soviet regime) should be enlisted in the soviets in towns. In this sense, electoral rights with respect to the soviets should gradually be expanded in accordance with local conditions. Initiative in this matter must lie with the RKP.

#### *5 Socialist supervision*

The matter of supervision in the Soviet republic must be radically reorganized in order to create genuine and actual supervision of a socialist character. The leading role in carrying out socialist supervision must fall to the party organizations and trade unions. To this end,

in the immediate future the very best people must be assigned to learn not just to supervise the work of the soviets, but also to organize it themselves.

### C. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PARTY AND THE SOVIETS

The soviets are the state organizations of the working class and the poorest peasantry that are carrying out a dictatorship of the proletariat during the period until all state power of whatever sort withers away.

The soviets unite in their ranks tens of millions of working people and must strive to unite within those ranks the entire working class and all poor and middle peasants.

The Communist Party is an organization that unites in its ranks only the vanguard of the proletariat and the poorer peasantry, i.e., the portion of these classes that is consciously striving to make a communist programme a reality.

The Communist Party sets itself the task of winning decisive influence and complete control in all organizations of the working people: in trade unions, co-operatives, rural communes, etc. The Communist Party particularly strives to carry out its Programme and establish its complete control in the contemporary stage organizations that are the soviets.

It is absolutely necessary that a party fraction be set up in all soviet organizations, and that such fractions be strictly subordinated to party discipline. Such party fractions are to include all members of the Russian Communist Party who work in the given Soviet organization.

Through its practical, day-to-day, selfless work in the soviets, the RKP must win for itself a position of undivided political supremacy in the soviets and of actual control over all their work.

In no case would it do to confuse the functions of party collectives with the functions of state bodies such as the soviets. Such a confusion would yield fatal results, particularly in military matters. The party must implement its decisions through the soviet bodies, *within the framework of the Soviet Constitution*. The party strives to *direct* the work of the soviets, not to replace them.

Many alien elements have made their way into the soviet organization. The soviets have to fight bureaucratism, red tape, slipshod work, organizational diffuseness and narrow-minded local 'patriotism,' etc.

But unhealthy symptoms are observable within party organizations as well. On the one hand, the party's best forces pour out of the party and into the soviet organizations and devote all their energies and all their time to soviet state work. On the other hand, there is an extensive influx into the party of elements that are insufficiently communist and even of outright hangers-on. The RKP is in power, and this inevitably attracts not just the best elements, but also careerist elements, to its ranks. And this is the reason for the quite correct limitations placed on party members' voting rights as concerns the All-Russian Party Congress.

A thorough-going *purge* of both soviet and party organizations is necessary. The strictest discipline is required of every last party member. All party members, however important the state positions they might hold, are unconditionally subject to party control. But at the same time, party organizations must never have recourse to petty tutelage over the soviets and must give their members to understand that membership in the RKP accords no privileges whatsoever, but merely puts heavier responsibilities on them.

McNeal, *Resolutions*, Vol. 2; Gregor, *Early Soviet Period*, pp. 83-89.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AUTONOMOUS BASHKIR SOVIET REPUBLIC

March 23, 1919

*Winning support among the Moslem populations was a major concern of the Bolshevik leadership during the Civil War, especially in the Volga-Urals region. This agreement's immediate purpose was to facilitate the defection of the Bashkir forces from the Whites to the Reds, and as such illustrates a political-military feature of the war. However, it also is an early illustration of a more permanent feature of the Soviet political system: the use of autonomous republics (and regions) for some of the minority nationality groups within the country. The authority of the Bashkir Republic was severely curtailed in 1920, once victory in the civil war made Soviet power secure. Details of boundary descriptions are omitted.*

## AGREEMENT, DATED MARCH 23, 1919

BETWEEN THE CENTRAL SOVIET AUTHORITIES AND THE BASHKIR AUTHORITIES  
ON THE SOVIET AUTONOMY OF BASHKIRIIA

1. The Autonomous Bashkir Soviet Republic (ABSR) is formed within the boundaries of Malaia [Little] Bashkiriia and forms a federal part entering into the composition of the RSFSR.... [Here follows a description of the boundaries.]

5. The railways, factories, and mines situated on Bashkir territory remain within the direct jurisdiction of the central soviet authority. At the same time, in allotting the products of local industry, the demands and necessities of the ABSR are first satisfied.

6. The territory of Malaia Bashkiriia is divided into several administrative units called cantons, *vid:....* [Here follows a further description of boundaries.]

7. The rural districts of the counties of Zlatoust, Troitsk, and Ufimsk form a separate administrative unit, even in case of their attachment to Bashkiriia.

8. Authority in the ABSR is constituted in conformity with the Soviet Constitution ratified by the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets on July 10, 1918.

9. In order to strengthen the soviet power in the ABSR and to support the struggle against the Russian, as well as against the international counterrevolution, a separate Bashkir army is organized, consisted of one cavalry division of four regiments, and one rifle-brigade of three regiments. These regiments are subordinate to a common command and are administered in conformity with the statute on the Red Army.

10. All armament and the maintenance of the Bashkir army shall be supplied from the all-Russian military stock on the same basis as for the Red Army.

11. Internal protection and order shall be maintained in the ABSR by the armed proletariat of the republic.

12. In order to organize soviet power and to promote cultural-educational measures in the country, the RSFSR shall grant all possible financial assistance to the ABSR.

13. Pending the convocation of the Congress of Soviets, all power throughout the ABSR shall be vested in the Provisional Revolutionary Bashkir Committee. A mixed commission of five persons shall be formed for the convocation of the Congress. Two members shall be delegated by the Bashkir Revolutionary Committee, two by the central soviet authority; the fifth shall be appointed in agreement with the parties and the commission.

14. The Bashkir Provisional Revolutionary Committee (or the Central Executive Committee of the ABSR) and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee mutually delegate their representatives (two from each) with the right of plenipotentiary members of the above-mentioned organs.

15. The capital of the ABSR remains temporarily the locality Temiasovo; the definitive settlement of this question is left to the Bashkir Congress of Soviets.

16. The members of the Bashkir government, of the administrative institutions, and social organizations are not subject to persecution on account of their former activity.

Signed:

People's Commissar for Nationalities: I. Stalin.

President of the Bashkir government: Mstislav Kulaev.

Member of the Bashkir regional republic: Mulladzhan Khalikov.

Adjutant of the commander of the Bashkir army: Ardashit Bikbarov.

Agreement approved:

President of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee: M. Vladimirsky.

President of the Council of People's Commissars: V. Ul'ianov (Lenin).

Secretary: A. Ehlukidze.

Batsell, pp. 140-141.



## POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL WORK IN THE VILLAGES

March 23, 1919

*Agrarian issues were the subject of extensive debates at the Eighth Party Congress, which met March 18-23; the agrarian section met for three days, and they were the subject of discussion in the general meetings as well. This resolution, whose creation included input by both Lenin and Lunacharsky brought together several concerns of the regime: the need to build support among the peasantry through propaganda work, the need to spread general but politically correct education among the peasantry, and the need for specialized agricultural education. Running through it also was the general Bolshevik distrust of and condescension toward the peasantry. The use of the term "dark," as in "dark villages" and "dark masses," was commonly used by educated Russians as a pejorative to describe what they saw as the backwardness and political unreliability of the peasantry.*

## POLITICAL PROPAGANDA AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY IN THE VILLAGES

Resolution of the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party

Bearing in mind the necessity of a firm and lasting alliance between the proletariat and the poorest peasants and peasants of medium means; also bearing in mind the political darkness, the general ignorance and the low standard of agricultural knowledge in the villages, which are serious obstacles and which condemn the poorest peasantry and the peasantry of medium means to poverty and stagnation, the Communist Party is compelled to pay most serious attention to the matter of education in the villages in the broadest sense of the word.

For the purpose of educational activities in the villages the following elements must co-operate:

1. Communistic propaganda;
2. General education;
3. Agricultural education.

1. Political propaganda in the villages must be carried on among the literate peasants as well as among the illiterate.

The propaganda among the literate must consist first of all in the distribution of popular literature and newspapers of a communistic character, specially prepared for this purpose. Such literature must be sold at very low prices in schools, reading huts and in all Soviet stores.

It is necessary to strive for the organization of reading rooms in every school with a political department and that such reading rooms should be in every village People's House; in places where there are not such People's Houses, popular political books must be an essential part of every reading hut.

The courses for children, and especially those for adults—the academic as well as the special (agricultural for instance)—must include: (1) popular history of culture from a scientific socialistic point of view and with a specially prepared part devoted to Russian history and to the history of the Great Russian Revolution; (2) the interpretation of the Soviet constitution. For both of these courses proper textbooks are to be prepared immediately.

The teachers are obliged to look upon themselves as upon agents not only of a general but also of a communistic education.

In this respect they must be subjected to the control of their immediate heads, as well as of the local party organizations.

Moving picture houses, theatres, concerts, exhibitions, etc., inasmuch as they will reach the villages (and all effort is to be exerted for this purpose), must be utilized for communistic propaganda directly, i.e. through the upkeep of these and also by way of combining these with lectures and meetings.

Departments of public education—provincial and county—with the assistance and under the control of the local party organizations, must organize collegiums of propagandists who are partly permanent, i.e. attached to their locality, and partly traveling, i.e. such as will cover a more or less wide section.

In the big city centers it is necessary that the party organizations should form collegiums of propagandists-instructors (in accordance with the local organs of the Commissariat of Education), who would carry on a traveling propaganda directly among the masses, and also instruct the less experienced comrades in the localities.

In this connection the convention calls special attention to the possibility of utilizing the work of the regiments of industrial workers, who are under the direction of the All-Russian Soviet of Professional Unions.

For the illiterate, periodical readings must be arranged in the schools, on the premises of the volost Soviet of Deputies, in the reading huts, etc., for which purpose the departments of public education, with the assistance of the local party organizations, create special circles of readers, including the local teaching staff, with obligatory readings by the literate elements. The subjects of the readings should be the decrees and administrative order of the Soviets, together with specially prepared popular interpretations sent out by the centers (party or Soviet Centres), also stories from readers, which are being constantly revised. It would be advisable to accompany such reading with illustrations by way of motion pictures or stereopticon slides; also with a reading of fiction, as well as concerts for the purpose of attracting large audiences.

2. General education—within school and outside of school (including artistic education: theatres, concerts, motion pictures, exhibitions, etc.) endeavoring not only to shed the light of a varied knowledge on the dark villages, but primarily to aid in the creation of self-consciousness and of a clear conception of things—must be closely connected with the communistic propaganda. There are not any forms of science and art which are not connected with the great ideas of communism and with the various tasks of creating communistic economy.

As far as the schools are concerned, the question of revising them on principles of continuity and labor has been decided. It is necessary to pay special attention to all forms of out-of-school education for adults. The party must by all means assist the Soviet authorities and the local population in the organization of a large system of community centers (People's Houses), for which purpose the Soviet estates are to be used first of all. The community centers must be peasants' clubs for resting, for sensible amusements and broad enlightenment, general as well as communistic.



The Communist Party, permitting and encouraging the utilization of the knowledge of the specialists and other educated persons for conducting courses and for aiding in conducting communistic centers, must take care at the same time that the elements hostile to the Soviet power should not make use of the apparatus of general education and should not introduce in the form of literature, science and art any counter-revolutionary, or anti-social tendencies, and should not thereby paralyze the efforts of communistic propaganda.

3. The peasants feel keenly the need of agricultural education.

The Soviet estates, as well as the farm schools, must become the lighthouses of agricultural education. Agricultural institutions, organized and maintained by the People's Commissariat of Education, must be in closest contact with the agricultural institutions of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture.

There must not be any schools, colleges or any other educational organizations in the villages, which would not endeavor (in accordance with the principle of combining studies with productive labor) to function at the same time as an organization of a model husbandry—complete or in part.

Agricultural education must be carried on in such a way as to combine this with communistic ideas and it should serve as a pillar to the general effort of the party to reconstruct private establishments into one organized socialistic institution.

Propaganda among peasants must not be apart from life problems of agriculturalists, but must be closely connected with the questions of rural economy.

The state school must be freed from all religious instruction and every attempt at counter-revolutionary propaganda under the guise of religious sermons must be thwarted.

But the constitution of Soviet Russia recognizes full freedom of religious propaganda for all citizens and this convention calls special attention to the absolute impossibility of any such restrictions of this right and even of a shadow of violence in the questions of religion. Persons, who encroach upon religious liberties of citizens of any creed, must be subjected to strict judgement.

*Soviet Russia*, Vol. I, No. 6 (July 12, 1919), pp. 13-14.



## AGRARIAN AND LABOR POLICIES OF THE WHITE GOVERNMENTS

March 23, 1919

*One of the major problems of the White forces was their failure to develop social policies which could generate popular support. Their various programmatic statements tended to focus on anti-Bolshevism and convening an elected constituent assembly to decide Russia's future after the defeat of Bolshevism. This issue was most important for General Anton Denikin, leader of the White forces in south Russia, whose armies had the best chance to—and for a period did—control large population bases. He outlined his thinking in these two documents, which were approved by the Special Conference, an advisory council of civilians and military officers which functioned as a government of sorts. Although among the most liberal of any of the White statements on social issues, there was little here to appeal to workers or peasants, especially given more attractive Bolshevik promises and the fear that a White victory might mean a return of the old landlords and ways. See also Admiral Kolchak's policy statement, April 19, 1919, below.*

## [AGRARIAN POLICY]

The national interests of Russia imperatively demand the revival and the rise of her agricultural economy.

The complete solution of the agrarian question all over Russia and the adoption of a uniform Land Law for the entire vast domain of Russia, belong to the legislative organs, through the medium of which the Russian people will acquire the opportunity to state their will.

Life, however, does not stand still. It is necessary to save the country from the pangs of hunger and to adopt immediate measures and to put them into practice at once. The Special Conference is, therefore, charged with the duty of undertaking without delay the drafting of rules and regulations for the localities under the administration of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Southern Russia.

I deem it necessary to point out the following premises which are to be laid at the foundation of these rules and regulations:

- 1) The safeguarding of the interests of the toiling population.
- 2) The creating and the placing on a sound basis of small and medium homesteads out of the lands belonging to the State and private owners.
- 3) The preservation of the right of landowners to their lands, coupled, however, with the apportionment in each district of the amount of land that is to be retained by the former owner and the order of the transfer of the remainder into the ownership of those who are land-poor. These transfers may be achieved by voluntary agreement, or by obligatory alienation for compensation. The new owners are to acquire inalienable rights to their allotments.
- 4) Lands belonging to Cossacks, former allotments, forests, lands of highly productive agricultural enterprises, and also lands which have no agricultural value, but belong to mining and other industrial establishments shall not be subject to alienation. In these two latter instances a maximum of the amount of lands to be held for such purposes is to be established for each territory.
- 5) Intensive aid to be given to tillers of the land through technical improvement of the lands, expert agricultural assistance, the supply of implements, seeds, dead and live inventory, etc.

Without waiting for the final solution of the land situation, it is necessary to take measures at once to facilitate the transfer of lands to those who are land-poor and to raise the productivity of agricultural labor. The authorities must take care that the spirit of revenge and class-hatred is kept in abeyance and that private interests are subordinated to the interests of the State.

## [FACTORY AND LABOR POLICY]

The industries of Russia are completely ruined, Russia's State power is destroyed, her enterprises are bankrupt and millions of workers are deprived of work and bread.

I propose to the Special Conference to undertake at once the consideration of steps to revive industry and to draft a system of labor legislation on the basis of the following premises:

- 1) The reestablishment of the legal rights of the owners of factories and workshops, and, at the same time, the safeguarding of the trade and industrial interests of the working class.
- 2) The establishment of State control over production in the interests of the national economy.
- 3) The increase, by all means available, of the productivity of labor.
- 4) The introduction of the 8-hour work-day in all factories and workshops.
- 5) Equitable regard for the interests of the employees and the employer and impartial adjustment of all disputes arising between them (Arbitration Chambers, Industrial Courts).
- 6) Progressive development of workers' insurance.

7) Organized representation of workers in connection with the normal development of the professional societies and unions.

8) Proper preservation of the health of the workers, the guarding of female and child labor, the establishment of sanitary inspection in factories, mills and workshops; the improvement of housing and other living conditions of the working class.

9) The employment of every means for the rebuilding of industrial enterprises and the creation of new ones in order to eliminate unemployment, and the adoption of other measures for the achievement of this purpose. (Help-employment agencies, etc.)

Representatives of labor and of the employers alike must be invited for the discussion of law-projects for labor legislation. Without waiting for the final preparation and realization of all plans for labor legislation, these basic premises should be applied in all current happenings and administrative practice. State aid should particularly be extended for the provision of workers and their families with articles of immediate necessity.

*Struggling Russia*, July 19, 1919, pp. 277-278, with modifications by the editor.



#### KOLCHAK ON THE FUTURE OF RUSSIA

April 19, 1919

*In the late winter and early spring of 1919 Admiral Kolchak's White Army made impressive gains from the east against the Red Army. In the flush of victory, Kolchak addressed a supportive audience of local officials in Ekaterinburg. His speech reflects the tendency of the Whites to focus on defeat of the Bolsheviks and then convening a constituent assembly (presumably conservative), and their failure to address issues which might develop a broad support. See also General Denikin's statement, March 23, 1919, above.*

Omsk, April 19—Admiral Kolchak, the head of the Omsk Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Armies, attended in Ekaterinburg a joint session of the Municipal Council and of the Zemstvo Assembly.

The Mayor of the city greeted Admiral Kolchak and the Omsk Government for the definite course the Government has taken in the internal and foreign policy. The President of the Zemstvo Assembly announced that the peasants of their region have collected more than 1,000,000 roubles for the army. The representatives of the Socialists-Revolutionists announced that the Party has excluded from its ranks those who have opened parleys with the Bolsheviks. The representative of the People's Socialists said: "At this moment, when all the forces must be united to reestablish the State, the Party of People's Socialists will support the Omsk Government, headed by Admiral Kolchak. The Party approves of the democratic course taken by the Omsk Government."

To these speeches Admiral Kolchak answered: "During my tour to the front I often met representatives of Municipalities, Zemstvos, professional, workers and Socialist organizations. I am happy to state that there is complete unity of purpose and action between the Government and the representatives of the people. The time has gone forever when the Government and public opinion in Russia are two different factors opposed to each other. A new free Russia must be built upon complete union between the Government and the people."

"The program of the Government is to reestablish the economic and political life of the country in close cooperation with the organs of local self-government—Municipalities and Zemstvos. The first task of the Government is to reestablish the rule of law and order, the rule destroyed by Bolshevism from the Left and the Right. The Government will fight, without any possibility of compromise, the Bolsheviks of the Left and of the Right, with the purpose of establishing a great, free, democratic Russia.

"The future Russia will be a democratic Russia. The Government, of which I have the honor to be the head, believes in universal suffrage, in the autonomous development of the nationalities comprising Russia, in a democratic solution of the main Russian problems: the land problem and the labor problem.

"With regard to the international relations, the Government will endeavor to continue the relations established between Russia and the rest of the world at the moment of Russia's entrance into the war in 1914. The Government will do its best to strengthen the bonds between Russia and the Allies. It is evident that no conciliation is possible with the Bolsheviks, and those of the Allied leaders who recently supported the idea of the Prinkipo Conference are now repudiating the Bolsheviks and call them by their proper name: murderers of humanity.

"This is the program of the Government, the program for the realization of which it calls upon the country to be ready for sacrifices. The Government considers the people of Russia the supreme authority in all problems pertaining to Russia's life. After the menace of Bolshevism is destroyed, the people of Russia, through a freely chosen Constituent Assembly, will express their supreme will and will define the structure of the State, will solve the main political, social and national problems. The Government and myself will consider it our duty to transfer to the Constituent Assembly all the power which now belongs to the Government."

*Struggling Russia*, May 3, 1919, p. 106.



## SEARCHING FOR FOODSTUFFS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

May 5, 1919

*The extreme shortage of foodstuffs in the cities forced urban residents to make trips into the countryside in search of basic food. Babine (see the introduction to December 28, 1917) recorded many such forays.*

May 5, 1919. The bread ration having been reduced to 1/4 lb. per diem, I decided to institute a bread hunt yesterday and went with Professor Tsytoich, his wife, and a lady friend of theirs to the village of Muravievka, about four miles from Saratov. On our way we were joined by Mr. Trutnev, a student of Saratov University, who on his part intended to try for sweet milk in the same place. But in Muravievka my student friend and myself found neither milk nor bread, and went to Rokotovka, another village not far distant. Inquiring at every house, we passed nearly half of the village, finding neither of the products in which we were interested. At the new house of a casual acquaintance of mine, Mr. I.I. Alekseev (or Vorobiev), whom I had met on a woodcock hunt last spring, we were invited to tea, after which we began our labors with renewed vigor, but met with the same luck. We were told many a time that milk had been taken earlier in the morning by other visitors from the city; that

as to bread there was hardly any hope of finding any, since the villagers had to buy grain and flour for their own consumption. Some of the villagers rather pointedly referred to the condition into which the country had been thrown by the present government. Entering one of the board-fenced yards and following to the house door a middle-aged man, apparently the head of the family, I saw Mr. T. listen to a refusal administered by a buxom young woman rather neatly dressed and groomed for a village girl. "Is there any milk?" asked the man quietly and firmly. "Go and ask your mother." The mother appeared from an inner room, glanced at us with a shy smile, and explained to her lord and master that somebody had promised to bring soap in exchange for milk that same evening. But at her husband's bidding she went to the cellar. "Why only one pot? Bring another so they might have one apiece." And another pot of rich milk came from the cellar and was emptied into our demijohn. Without too strong an entreaty on my part, the host bade the lady to give me a loaf of bread, and when she brought a stale loaf from the closet, he insisted on her giving me a fresh one. I was so touched by his attention that I wished to make him a present of some tobacco (a scarce article in the country)—which he, though not a smoker himself, courteously accepted in order to present it to a friend of his—but gave me some country pastry in return. We flew home delighted, I especially, being rid of the prospect of living without bread for part of the week.

Babine, pp. 141-142.



## MOBILIZATION OF WORKERS INTO THE RED ARMY

May 9, 1919

*Manpower for the many tasks to be done was a major problem for the party and government. In emergencies both turned especially to the industrial workers as a class, although this caused serious problems in keeping industry working. The following is an example of this type of mobilization. The 20,000 called for here—the number is that estimated as the difference between Soviet troops in the area and those of General Denikin's opposing White army—represented a large percent of the remaining industrial work force of these cities. One assumes that "the workers of Khar'kov and Ekaterinoslav" were not "drafted to a man," but the ordering of it reflects the rhetorical style of the time.*

### Telegram

From: Moscow May 9, 1919. No. 101

To: Kiev—Kamenev, Ioffe, Rakovsky.

The C.C. [Central Committee] considers the most important task for the next two weeks to be the carrying out of the mobilisation of not less than 20,000 workers for the purpose, not of forming new units, but of incorporating them into the best cadres on the Southern Front. The workers of Khar'kov and Ekaterinoslav must be drafted to a man. Comrades Kamenev and Ioffe must apply all their efforts to this work. It is essential that Comrade Kamenev see to it that this is done in Khar'kov and Ekaterinoslav, and Comrade Ioffe likewise from where he is in Kiev. What now matters as a whole is to gain time. The mobilisation must be fully completed within 14 days. Party workers must be forcibly inspired with the thought that the fate of the Revolution depends on the successful carrying out of this mobilisation. Extensive agitation and energetic and rapid organisational measures are what is needed. The men mobilised must be sent off in company drafts as soon as possible and the necessary number

of Communists included in each such draft. A stock of uniforms, even if not of the proper issue, must be laid in beforehand. The dispatch of the company drafts must not meet with delay for want of uniforms. Party Committees and Trade Unions must be brought in on the mobilisation and assigned specific tasks. The C.C. regards the figure of 20,000 as the minimum and the fortnight allowed for this as the maximum for the purpose of rescuing our position on the Southern Front. This task must be performed with exceptional energy. Report without delay all measures taken by you. Telegraph the results achieved to the C.C. every three days.

Lenin  
Trotsky  
Krestinsky  
Stalin

Meijer, Vol. 1, pp. 409-411. See Permissions page.



ALLIED "RECOGNITION" OF ADMIRAL KOLCHAK'S GOVERNMENT  
May 26, 1919

*The "Russian Question" was a frequent topic for discussion among the Allied leaders at the Paris Peace Conference, and whether to recognize one of the combatants—and if so which one—as the government of Russia was a key issue. Although usually taken to represent formal recognition, this message to Kolchak in fact stated only that they were "disposed to assist" him if he met several conditions, some of which were at variance with his own Russian nationalist views. Kolchak's acceptance was meaningless as by that time his armies were in retreat. Nonetheless, the document illustrates both Allied thinking about intervention at the time and something of the complexity of the "Russian Question" as a diplomatic issue.*

Despatch to Admiral Kolchak  
Paris, 26 May, 1919.

The Allied and Associated Powers feel that the time has come when it is necessary for them once more to make clear the policy they propose to pursue in regard to Russia.

It has always been a cardinal axiom of the Allied and Associated Powers to avoid interference in the internal affairs of Russia. Their original intervention was made for the sole purpose of assisting those elements in Russia which wanted to continue the struggle against German autocracy and to free their country from German rule, and in order to rescue the Czecho-Slovaks from the danger of annihilation at the hands of the Bolshevik forces. Since the signature of the Armistice on November 11th, 1918, they have kept forces in various parts of Russia. Munitions and supplies have been sent to assist those associated with them at a very considerable cost. No sooner, however, did the Peace Conference assemble than they endeavoured to bring peace and order to Russia by inviting representatives of all the warring Governments within Russia to meet them in the hope that they might be able to arrange a permanent solution of Russian problems. This proposal and a later offer to relieve the distress among the suffering millions of Russia broke down through the refusal of the Soviet Government to accept the fundamental condition of suspending hostilities while negotiations or the work of relief was proceeding. Some of the Allied and Associated Governments are now being pressed to withdraw their troops and to incur no further expense in Russia on the ground that continued intervention shows no prospect of producing an early

settlement. They are prepared, however, to continue their assistance on the lines laid below, provided they are satisfied that it will really help the Russian people to liberty, self-government, and peace.

The Allied and Associated Governments now wish to declare formally that the object of their policy is to restore peace within Russia by enabling the Russian people to resume control of their own affairs through the instrumentality of a freely elected Constituent Assembly and to restore peace along its frontiers by arranging for the settlement of disputes in regard to the boundaries of the Russian state and its relations with its neighbours through the peaceful arbitration of the League of Nations.

They are convinced by their experiences of the last twelve months that it is not possible to attain these ends by dealings with the Soviet Government of Moscow. They are therefore disposed to assist the Government of Admiral Koltchak and his Associates with munitions, supplies and food, to establish themselves as the government of all Russia, provided they receive from them definite guarantees that their policy has the same objects in view as that of the Allied and Associated Powers. With this object they would ask Admiral Koltchak and his Associates whether they will agree to the following as the conditions upon which they accept continued assistance from the Allied and Associated Powers.

In the first place, that, as soon as they reach Moscow they will summon a Constituent Assembly elected by a free, secret and democratic franchise as the Supreme Legislature for Russia to which the Government of Russia must be responsible, or if at that time order is not sufficiently restored they will summon the Constituent Assembly elected in 1917 to sit until such time as new elections are possible.

Secondly, that throughout the areas which they at present control they will permit free elections in the normal course for all local and legally constituted assemblies such as municipalities, Zemstvos, etc.

Thirdly, that they will countenance no attempt to revive the special privileges of any class or order in Russia. The Allied and Associated Powers have noted with satisfaction the solemn declaration made by Admiral Koltchak and his associates that they have no intention of restoring the former land system. They feel that the principles to be followed in the solution of this and other internal questions must be left to the free decision of the Russian Constituent Assembly; but they wish to be assured that those whom they are prepared to assist stand for the civil and religious liberty of all Russian citizens and will make no attempt to reintroduce the regime which the revolution has destroyed.

Fourthly, that the independence of Finland and Poland be recognised, and that in the event of the frontiers and other relations between Russia and these countries not being settled by agreement, they will be referred to the arbitration of the League of Nations.

Fifthly, that if a solution of the relations between Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Caucasian and Transcaspian territories and Russia is not speedily reached by agreement the settlement will be made in consultation and co-operation with the League of Nations, and that until such settlement is made the Government of Russia agrees to recognise these territories as autonomous and to confirm the relations which may exist between their *defacto* Governments and the Allied and Associated Governments.

Sixthly, the right of the Peace Conference to determine the future of the Roumanian part of Bessarabia, be recognised.

Seventhly, that as soon as a Government for Russia has been constituted on a democratic basis, Russia should join the League of Nations and co-operate with the other members in the limitation of armaments and of military organisation throughout the world.

Finally, that they abide by the declaration made by Admiral Koltchak on November 27th, 1918, in regard to Russia's national debts.

The Allied and Associated Powers will be glad to learn as soon as possible whether the Government of Admiral Koltchak and his associates are prepared to accept these conditions,

and also whether in the event of acceptance they will undertake to form a single government and army command as soon as the military situation makes it possible.

G. Clemenceau  
D. Lloyd George  
V. E. Orlando  
Woodrow Wilson  
Saionji

*Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919, Russia, pp. 367-370.*



# ATTEMPTED UNIFICATION OF THE RUSSIAN, UKRAINIAN, LATVIAN, LITHUANIAN AND BELORUSSIAN SOVIET REPUBLICS

June 1, 1919

*Encouragement of nationalist movements as a means of gathering support during the Civil War created problems for establishing later a strong central political authority. This was accomplished in part by creating a federal system and in part via the dominant role of the Communist Party, which did not accept federalism within itself. An initial step toward unification was to unify the military forces of supposedly independent or autonomous Soviet republics, and then other functions. This decree by the Central Executive Committee of the RSFSR, the Russian Republic, represents the first stage in the process that would lead to the forming of the USSR (although neither Latvia nor Lithuania would be part of it).*

## DECREE OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The socialist soviet republics created by the laboring masses on the territories of Russia, the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, and White Russia have repeatedly proclaimed to the world their readiness to enter into peace negotiations in order to terminate the war which was imposed upon them. The forces of international imperialism, entertaining the insane hope of conquering the whole world, striving for an unlimited exploitation of the wealth of these countries, and united against the universal movement of the laboring masses, have rejected the peaceful proposals of the laboring masses of Russia, the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, and White Russia, and now exert all their efforts in order to suppress the soviet power in all places where it was created by the unified revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants. World capital, having mobilized against soviet power all the forces of the monarchist and capitalistic counter-revolution, strives to strangle the power of the workers and peasants by a common aggression on all frontiers. The suppression of this attempt to plunge again into slavery tens of millions of Russian, Ukrainian, Lettish, Lithuanian, White-Russian and Crimean workers and peasants, requires of them a most close union of all military forces, their centralization and control in the difficult struggle for life or death. A military union of all the above-mentioned socialist soviet republics must be the first reply to the aggression of the common foes. Therefore, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, standing firmly for the principle of recognizing the independence, liberty, and self-determination of the laboring masses of the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, White-Russia, and Crimea and adopting the resolution of the Ukrainian Central Executive Committee approved by the assembly of May 18, 1918, and responding to the proposals of the soviet governments of Latvia, Lithuania, and White Russia, acknowledges the necessity of forming a close union of the: (1) military organizations



and military command, (2) soviets of people's economy, (3) railway administration and economic structure, (4) finances, (5) commissariats for labor of the RSFSR, the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, White-Russia, and Crimea, whereby the supervision of the above-mentioned branches of national life shall be concentrated in the hands of separate collegia.

The union must be effected in the form of an agreement with the central executive committee and soviet of people's commissars of each of the above-mentioned republics.

For the realization of the said measures, the Central Executive Committee elects a commission charged with immediate entrance into negotiations with the representatives of the corresponding central executive committee in order to elaborate, together with them, concrete standards of union, and to formulate immediately, until the elaboration of a definitive union, regulations relating to the practical application of the same.

Batsell, pp. 243-245, with modifications by the editor.



## LABOR BOOKS

June 25, 1919

*Labor books had been introduced in 1918, both as a punitive measure against the propertied classes and as a vehicle for labor mobilization and control. First applied to non-proletarian elements, they were soon extended to all classes of society and became a long-term feature of Soviet life. In the expanded functions provided for here, the labor book served as an identification document, a work record, a rationing card, a control device, and to show eligibility for various social benefits (compare to the more limited role provided for in the Labor Law of October 31, 1918, given above).*

### ABOUT THE INTRODUCTION OF LABOR BOOKS TO THE CITIES OF MOSCOW AND PETROGRAD

1. All R.S.F.S.R. citizens who have reached the age of sixteen are obligated to have labor books which document their owner's participation in productive activity, serve as personal identification papers within the R.S.F.S.R. boundaries, and as documentation of the right to receive food ration cards, as well as the right to social security benefits in cases of disability and unemployment.

Note 1. Those serving in the Red Army and Fleet are obligated to have labor books for the same reasons as others.

Note 2. On the basis of birth and death entries or certified recorded documentation, children under sixteen are entered in the mother's labor book or in the absence of the mother, that of the father, and in the absence of both mother and father—in the labor book of the person with whom they live and upon whom they are dependent.

Note 3. In case of the resettlement to a locality where labor books have not been introduced they serve only as identification.

2. Labor books are issued by the Executive Committee administration departments.

3. Labor books are issued only upon presentation of a passport, which is taken away after the book is distributed.

4. A labor book is distributed upon compliance with items I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII and XVII in the labor books by the appropriate persons.

5. Institutions, where the holder of a labor book works, are obligated under the personal responsibility of the institution manager to enter information about when and to whom a payment was made, the production time for which payment was made, the amount of distribution, their signature or the signature of an authorized person, and the seal of the institution or enterprise, no later than seven days after wages are paid.

Note: When wages are paid by an institution, enterprise, or economic unit which does not have a seal, then it is affixed by the house committee where the holder of the book works.

6. Enterprises, institutions and farms where special accounting books are established are permitted to enter in the labor books information established in the fifth item of the current decree, either summarily once a month no later than the seventh day of the following month, or on the general principles indicated in the fifth item of the current decree.

7. In labor books of persons who for some reason do not have an employer—independent artisans, handicraftsmen and merchants—a record of earnings is made once a month by the same owners of the book and who are responsible for the accuracy of the information entered. The procedure for verifying the accuracy of the entries is established by the special instructions.

8. Simultaneously with the submission of salary information into the labor book, enterprises and institutions are obligated to paste on a stamp attesting to the payment of fees for social security and protection of labor according to the statute of October 31, 1918 (1918 *Collection of Laws*, No. 89, page 906). The procedure for receipt and cancelling of stamps is established by the local organs conducting the receipt of stated fees.

Note 1. Stamps are not pasted in labor books of the unemployed and of those persons employed by enterprises which are exempted from payment of insurance fees. Instead, a stamp or special monitoring marks will be affixed, in the first instance by subdivisions of workforce distribution and in the second by the appropriate institution.

Note 2. Monitoring marks are pasted in the labor books of people indicated in the seventh item of the current decree by the holders of the book themselves.

9. In case the holder of the labor book changes place of employment or service, it is noted by the institution or enterprise where the person came from and where he went.

10. When a card is issued for rationed goods an appropriate mark is made by those organs conducting the distribution.

11. If holders of the labor book change residency, administration departments make a note in the books indicating change of residency.

12. Pasting photographs in labor books is not obligatory until a special enactment is made.

13. All crimes connected with issuing, receiving or using a labor book belong under the authority of the People's Court.

14. Instructions on the procedure of introduction of labor books, and on substitution of passports and other personal certifications by them, are confirmed by the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs and the People's Commissar of Labor, and in part by the People's Commissar of War (with regard to the issue of labor books to Red Army soldiers and sailors of the Red Fleet).

*Sobranie uzakonenii i rasporiazhenii*, 1919, No. 28, St. 315, pp. 349-350.

## INTRODUCTION OF THE "SUBBOTNIK"

June 28, 1919

*The "subbotnik," the day of volunteer unpaid work, was to become a permanent political and economic feature of the Soviet Union. The term comes from subбота, Saturday. Aside from economic benefits, it had important political implications since it was supposed to be led by communists and was an expression of support for the regime and its objectives. It originated, as this selection shows, among railway workers during the darkest days of the Civil War, a time also when the railway system was plagued by disrepair. The letters quoted by Lenin give some sense of the temper of the originators and of their work. Moreover, Lenin seized upon the practice as evidence that under communism the Russian workers were creating a "free and conscious discipline," a "higher type of social organization of labour." In such efforts as the subbotnik, "young shoots of the new order," Lenin saw an essential part of the economic foundation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the reshaping of values necessary for a new society. Written in late June, this essay was published as an pamphlet in July, 1919.*

V.I. Lenin

*A Great Beginning. Heroism of the Workers in the Rear  
"Communist Subbotniks"*

The press reports many instances of the heroism of the Red Army men. In the fight against Kolchak, Denikin and other forces of the landowners and capitalists, the workers and peasants very often display miracles of bravery and endurance, defending the gains of the socialist revolution. The guerrilla spirit, weariness and indiscipline are being overcome; it is a slow and difficult process, but it is making headway in spite of everything. The heroism of the working people making voluntary sacrifices for the victory of socialism—this is the foundation of the new, comradely discipline in the Red Army, the foundation on which that army is regenerating, gaining strength and growing.

The heroism of the workers in the rear is no less worthy of attention. In this connection, the *communist subbotniks* organised by the workers on their own initiative are really of enormous significance. Evidently, this is only a beginning, but it is a beginning of exceptionally great importance. It is the beginning of a revolution that is more difficult, more tangible, more radical and more decisive than the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, for it is a victory over our own conservatism, indiscipline, petty-bourgeois egoism, a victory over the habits left as a heritage to the worker and peasant by accursed capitalism. Only when *this* victory is consolidated will the new social discipline, socialist discipline, be created; then and only then will a reversion to capitalism become impossible, will communism become really invincible.

*Pravda* in its issue of May 17 published an article by A. J. entitled: "*Work in a Revolutionary Way. A Communist Saturday.*" This article is so important that we reproduce it here in full.

WORK IN A REVOLUTIONARY WAY  
A COMMUNIST SATURDAY

"The letter of the Russian Communist Party's Central Committee on working in a *revolutionary way* was a powerful stimulus to communist organisations and to Communists. The general wave of enthusiasm carried many communist railway workers to the front, but the majority of them could not leave their responsible posts or find new forms of working in a revolutionary way. Reports from the localities about the tardiness with which the work of mobilisation was proceeding and the prevalence of red tape compelled the Moscow-Kazan Railway district to turn its attention to the way the railway was functioning. It turned out that, owing to the shortage of labour and low productivity of labour, urgent orders and repairs to locomotives were being held up. At a general meeting of Communists and sympathisers

of the Moscow-Kazan Railway district held on May 7, the question was raised of passing from words to deeds in helping to achieve victory over Kolchak. The following resolution was moved:

"In view of the grave domestic and foreign situation, Communists and sympathisers, in order to gain the upper hand over the class enemy, must spur themselves on again and deduct an extra hour from their rest, i.e., lengthen their working day by one hour, accumulate these extra hours and put in six extra hours of manual labour on Saturday for the purpose of creating real values of immediate worth. Since Communists must not grudge their health and life for the gains of the revolution, this work should be performed without pay. Communist Saturdays are to be introduced throughout the district and to continue until complete victory over Kolchak has been achieved."

"After some hesitation, the resolution was adopted unanimously.

On Saturday, May 10, at 6 p.m., the Communists and sympathisers turned up to work like soldiers, formed ranks, and without fuss or bustle were taken by the foremen to the various jobs.

"The results of working in a revolutionary way are evident. The accompanying table gives the places of work and the character of the work performed.

Place of Work	Character of Work	Number Employed	Hours Worked		Work Performed
			Per person	Total	
Moscow.	Loading materials for the line, devices for repairing locomotives and carriage parts for Perovo, Murom, Alaty and Syzran	48	5	240	Loaded 7,500 poods
Main locomotive shops		21	3	63	Unloaded 1,800 poods
		5	4	20	
Moscow. Passenger depot	Complex current repairs to locomotives	26	5	130	Repairs done on 1 1/2 locomotives
Moscow. Shunting yards	Current repairs to locomotives	24	6	144	2 locomotives completed and parts to be repaired dismantled on 4
Moscow. Carriage department	Current repairs to passenger carriages	12	6	72	2 third-class carriages
Perovo. Main carriage workshops	Carriage repairs and minor repairs on	46	5	230	12 box carriages and two flat carriages
	Saturday and Sunday	23	5	115	
	<i>Total</i>	205	—	1,014	4 locomotives and 16 carriages turned out and 9,300 poods unloaded and loaded.

"The total value of the work performed at ordinary rates of pay is five million rubles; calculated at overtime rates it would be fifty per cent higher.

"The productivity of labour in loading waggons was 270 per cent higher than that of regular workers. The productivity of labour on other jobs was approximately the same.

"Jobs (urgent) were done which had been held up for periods ranging from seven days to three months owing to the shortage of labour and to red tape.

"The work was done in spite of the state of disrepair (easily remedied) of implements, as a result of which certain groups were held up from thirty to forty minutes.

"The administration left in charge of the work could hardly keep pace with the men in finding new jobs for them, and perhaps it was only a slight exaggeration when an old foreman said that as much work was done at this *Communist Saturday* as would have been done in a week by non-class-conscious and slack workers.

"In view of the fact that many non-Communists, sincere supporters of the Soviet government, took part in the work, and that many more are expected on future Saturdays, and also in view of the fact that many other districts desire to follow the example of the communist railway workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway, I shall deal in greater detail with the organisational side of the matter as seen from reports received from the localities.

"Of those taking part in the work, some ten percent were Communists permanently employed in the localities. The rest were persons occupying responsible and elective posts, from the commissar of the railway to commissars of individual enterprises, representatives of the trade union, and employees of the head office and of the Commissariat of Railways.

"The enthusiasm and team spirit displayed during work were extraordinary. When the workers, clerks and head office employees, without even an oath or argument, caught hold of the forty-pood wheel tire of a passenger locomotive and, like industrious ants, rolled it into place, one's heart was filled with fervent joy at the sight of this collective effort, and one's conviction was strengthened that the victory of the working class was unshakable. The international bandits will not crush the victorious workers; the internal saboteurs will not like to see Kolchak.

"When the work was finished those present witnessed an unprecedented scene: a hundred Communists, weary, but with the light of joy in their eyes, greeted their success with the solemn strains of the *Internationale*. And it seemed as if the triumphant strains of the triumphant anthem would sweep over the walls through the whole of working-class Moscow and that like the waves caused by a stone thrown into a pool they would spread through the whole of working-class Russia and shake up the weary and the slack.

"A. J."

Appraising this remarkable "example worthy of emulation," Comrade N. R. in an article in *Pravda* of May 20, under that heading, wrote:

"Cases of Communists working like this are not rare. I know of similar cases at an electric power station, and on various railways. On the Nikolayevskaya Railway, the Communists worked overtime several nights to lift a locomotive that had fallen into the turn-table pit. In the winter, all the Communists and sympathisers on the Northern Railway worked several Sundays clearing the track of snow; and the communist cells at many goods stations patrol the stations at night to prevent stealing. But all this work was casual and unsystematic. The comrades on the Moscow-Kazan line are making this work systematic and permanent, and this is new. They say in their resolution, 'until complete victory over Kolchak has been achieved,' and therein lies the significance of their work. They are lengthening the working day of every Communist and sympathiser by one hour for the duration of the state of war; simultaneously, their productivity of labour is exemplary.

"This example has called forth, and is bound to call forth, further emulation. A general meeting of the Communists and sympathisers on the Alexandrovskaya Railway, after discussing the military situation and the resolution adopted by the comrades on the Moscow-Kazan Railway, resolved: (1) to introduce 'subbotniks' for the Communists and sympathisers on the Alexandrovskaya Railway, the first subbotnik to take place on May 17; (2) to organise the Communists and sympathisers in exemplary, model teams which must show the workers how to work and what can really be done with the present materials and tools, and in the present food situation.

"The Moscow-Kazan comrades say that their example has made a great impression and that they expect a large number of non-Party workers to turn up next Saturday. At the time these lines are being written, the Communists have not yet started working overtime in the Alexandrovskaya Railway workshops, but as soon as the rumour spread that they were to do so the mass of non-Party workers stirred themselves. 'We did not know yesterday, otherwise we would have worked as well!' 'I will certainly come next Saturday,' can be heard on all sides. The impression created by work of this sort is very great.

"The example set by the Moscow-Kazan comrades should be emulated by all the communist cells in the rear; not only the communist cells at Moscow Junction, but the whole Party organisation in Russia. In the rural districts too, the communist cells should in the first place set to work to till the fields of Red Army men and thus help their families.

"The comrades on the Moscow-Kazan line finished their first communist subbotnik by singing the *Internationale*. If the communist organisations throughout Russia follow this example and consistently apply it, the Russian Soviet Republic will successfully weather the coming severe months to the mighty strains of the *Internationale* sung by all the working people of the Republic.... "To work, communist comrades!"

On May 23, 1919, *Pravda* reported the following:

"The first communist 'subbotnik' on the Alexandrovskaya Railway took place on May 17. In accordance with the resolution adopted by their general meeting, ninety-eight Communists and sympathisers worked five hours overtime without pay, receiving in return only the right to purchase a second dinner, and, as manual labourers, half a pound of bread to go with their dinner."

Although the work was poorly prepared and organised the *productivity of labour was nevertheless from two to three times higher than usual*.

Here are a few examples.

Five turners turned eighty spindles in four hours. The productivity is 213 per cent of the usual level.

Twenty unskilled workers in four hours collected scrap materials of a total weight of 600 poods, and seventy laminated carriage springs, each weighing 3 1/2 poods, making a total of 850 poods. Productivity, 300 percent of the usual level.

"The comrades explain this by the fact that ordinarily their work is boring and tiresome, whereas here they worked with a will and with enthusiasm. Now, however, they will be ashamed to turn out less in regular working hours than they did at the communist subbotnik."

"Now many non-Party workers say that they would like to take part in the subbotniks. The locomotive crews volunteer to take locomotives from the 'cemetery,' during a subbotnik, repair them and set them going.

"It is reported that similar subbotniks are to be organised on the Vyazma line."

How the work is done at these communist subbotniks is described by Comrade A. Dyachenko in an article in *Pravda* of June 7, entitled "Notes of a Subbotnik Worker." We quote the main passages from this article.

"A comrade and I were very pleased to go and do our 'bit' in the subbotnik arranged by a decision of the railway district committee of the Party; for a time, for a few hours, I would give my head a rest and my muscles a bit of exercise.... We were detailed off to the railway carpentry shop. We got there, found a number of our people, exchanged greetings, engaged in banter for a bit, counted up our forces and found that there were thirty of us.... And in front of us lay a 'monster,' a steam boiler weighing no less than six or seven hundred poods; our job was to 'shift' it, i.e., move it over a distance of a quarter or a third of a verst, to its base. We began to have our doubts.... However, we started on the job. Some comrades placed wooden rollers under the boiler, attached two ropes to it, and we began to tug away.... The boiler gave way reluctantly, but at length it budged. We were delighted. After all, there were so few of us.... For nearly two weeks this boiler had resisted the efforts of thrice our number of non-communist workers and nothing could make it budge until we tackled it.... We worked

for an hour, strenuously, rhythmically, to the command of our 'foreman'—'one, two, three,' and the boiler kept on rolling. Suddenly there was confusion, and a number of our comrades went tumbling on to the ground in the funniest fashion. The rope 'let them down'.... A moment's delay, and a thicker rope was made fast.... Evening. It was getting dark, but we had yet to negotiate a small hillock, and then our job would soon be done. Our arms ached, our palms burned, we were hot and pulled for all we were worth—and were making headway. The 'management' stood round and somewhat shamed by our success, clutched at a rope. 'Lend a hand, it's time you did!' A Red Army man was watching our labours; in his hands he held an accordion. What was he thinking? Who were these people? Why should they work on Saturday when everybody was at home? I solved his riddle and said to him: 'Comrade, play us a jolly tune. We are not raw hands, we are real communists. Don't you see how fast the work is going under our hands? We are not lazy, we are pulling for all we are worth!' In response, the Red Army man carefully put his accordion on the ground then hastened to grab at a rope end....

"Suddenly Comrade U. struck up the workers' song 'Dubinushka,' '*anglichanin mudrets*,' he sang, in an excellent tenor voice and we all joined in the refrain of this labour shanty: '*Eh, dubinushka, ukhnem, podyornem, podyornem....*'

"We were unaccustomed to the work, our muscles were weary, our shoulders, our backs ached... but the next day would be a free day, our day of rest, and we would be able to get all the sleep we wanted. The goal was near, and after a little hesitation our 'monster' rolled almost right up to the base. 'Put some boards under, raise it on the base, and let the boiler do the work that has long been expected of it.' We went off in a crowd to the 'club room' of the local Party cell. The room was brightly lit; the walls decorated with posters; rifles stacked around the room. After lustily singing the *Internationale* we enjoyed a glass of tea and 'rum,' and even bread. This treat, given us by the local comrades, was very welcome after our arduous toil. We took a brotherly farewell of our comrades and lined up. The strains of revolutionary songs echoed through the slumbering streets in the silence of the night and our measured tread kept time with the music. We sang 'Comrades, the Bugles Are Sounding,' 'Arise Ye Starvelings from Your Slumbers,' songs of the International and of labour.

"A week passed. Our arms and shoulders were back to normal and we were going to another 'subbotnik,' nine versts away this time, to repair railway waggons. Our destination was Perovo. The comrades climbed on the roof of an 'American' box waggon and sang the *Internationale* well and with gusto. The people on the train listened to the singing, evidently in surprise. The wheels knocked a measured beat, and those of us who failed to get on to the roof clung to the steps, pretending to be 'devil-may-care' passengers. The train pulled in. We had reached our destination. We passed through a long yard and were warmly greeted by the commissar, Comrade G.

"There is plenty of work, but few to do it! Only thirty of us, and in six hours we have to do average repairs to a baker's dozen of waggons! Here are twin-wheels already marked. We have not only empty waggons, but also a filled cistern.... But that's nothing, we'll 'make a job of it,' comrades!"

"Work went with a swing. Five comrades and I were working with hoists. Under pressure of our shoulders and two hoists, and directed by our 'foreman,' these twin-wheels, weighing from sixty to seventy poods apiece, skipped from one track to another in the liveliest possible manner. One pair disappeared, another rolled into place. At last all were in their assigned places, and swiftly we shifted the old worn out junk into a shed.... One, two, three—and, raised by a revolving iron hoist, they were dislodged from the rails in a trice. Over there, in the dark, we heard the rapid strokes of hammers; the comrades, like worker bees, were busy on their 'sick' cars. Some were carpentering, others painting, still others were covering roofs, to the joy of the comrade commissar and our own. The smiths also asked for our aid.

In a portable smithy a rod with a coupling hook was gleaming white-hot; it had been bent by careless shunting. It was laid on the anvil, scattering white sparks, and, under the experienced direction of the smith, our trusty hammers beat it back into its proper shape. Still red-hot and spitting sparks, we rushed it on our shoulders to where it had to go. We pushed it into its socket. A few hammer strokes and it was fixed. We crawled under the waggon. The coupling system is not as simple as it looks; there are all sorts of contraptions with rivets and springs....

"Work was in full swing. Night was falling. The torches seemed to burn brighter than before. Soon it would be time to knock off. Some of the comrades were taking a 'rest' against some tires and 'sipping' hot tea. The May night was cool, and the new moon shone beautifully like a gleaming sickle in the sky. People were laughing and joking.

"Knock off, Comrade G., thirteen waggons are enough!"

"But Comrade G. was not satisfied.

"We finished our tea, broke into our songs of triumph, and marched to the door...."

The movement of "communist subbotniks" is not confined to Moscow. *Pravda* of June 6 reported the following:

"The first communist subbotnik in Tver took place on May 31. One hundred and twenty-eight Communists worked on the railway. In three and a half hours they loaded and unloaded fourteen waggons, repaired three locomotives, cut up ten sagesen of firewood and performed other work. The productivity of labour of the skilled communist workers was thirteen times above normal."

Again, on June 8 we read in *Pravda*:

#### COMMUNIST SUBBOTNIKS

"Saratov, June 5. In response to the appeal of their Moscow comrades, the communist railway workers here at a general Party meeting resolved: to work five hours overtime on Saturdays without pay in order to support the national economy."

\* \* \*

I have given the fullest and most detailed information about the communist subbotniks because in this we undoubtedly observe one of the most important aspects of communist construction, to which our press pays insufficient attention, and which all of us have as yet failed properly to appreciate.

Less political fireworks and more attention to the simplest but living facts of communist construction, taken from and tested by actual life—this is the slogan which all of us, our writers, agitators, propagandists, organisers, etc., should repeat unceasingly.

It was natural and inevitable in the first period after the proletarian revolution that we should be engaged primarily on the main and fundamental task of overcoming the resistance of the bourgeoisie, of vanquishing the exploiters, of crushing their conspiracy (like the "slave-owners' conspiracy" to surrender Petrograd, in which all from the Black Hundreds and Cadets to the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were involved). But simultaneously with this task, another task comes to the forefront just as inevitably and ever more imperatively as time goes on, namely, the more important task of positive communist construction, the creation of new economic relations, of a new society.

As I have had occasion to point out more than once, among other occasions in the speech I delivered at a session of the Petrograd Soviet on March 12, the dictatorship of the proletariat is not only the use of force against the exploiters, and not even mainly the use of force. The economic foundation of this use of revolutionary force, the guarantee of its effectiveness and success is the fact that the proletariat represents and creates a higher type of social organisation of labour compared with capitalism. This is what is important, this is the source of the strength and the guarantee that the final triumph of communism is inevitable.



The feudal organisation of social labour rested on the discipline of the bludgeon, while the working people, robbed and tyrannised by a handful of landowners, were utterly ignorant and downtrodden. The capitalist organisation of social labour rested on the discipline of hunger, and, notwithstanding all the progress of bourgeois culture and bourgeois democracy, the vast mass of the working people in the most advanced, civilised and democratic republics remained an ignorant and down trodden mass of wage-slaves or oppressed peasants, robbed and tyrannised by a handful of capitalists. The communist organisation of social labour, the first step towards which is socialism, rests, and will do so more and more as time goes on, on the free and conscious discipline of the working people themselves who have thrown off the yoke both of the landowners and capitalists.

This new discipline does not drop from the skies, nor is it born from pious wishes; it grows out of the material conditions of large-scale capitalist production, and out of them alone. Without them it is impossible. And the repository, or the vehicle, of these material conditions is a definite historical class, created, organised, united, trained, educated and hardened by large-scale capitalism. This class is the proletariat.

If we translate the Latin, scientific, historico-philosophical term "dictatorship of the proletariat" into simpler language, it means just the following:

Only a definite class, namely, the urban workers and the factory, industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the working and exploited people in the struggle to throw off the yoke of capital, in actually carrying it out, in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the victory, in the work of creating the new, socialist social system and in the entire struggle for the complete abolition of classes. (Let us observe in parenthesis that the only scientific distinction between socialism and communism is that the first term implies the first stage of the new society arising out of capitalism, while the second implies the next and higher stage.)

The mistake the "Berne" yellow International makes is that its leaders accept the class struggle and the leading role of the proletariat only in word and are afraid to think it out to its logical conclusion. They are afraid of that inevitable conclusion which particularly terrifies the bourgeoisie, and which is absolutely unacceptable to them. They are afraid to admit that the dictatorship of the proletariat is also a period of class struggle, which is inevitable as long as classes have not been abolished, and which changes in form, being particularly fierce and particularly peculiar in the period immediately following the overthrow of capital. The proletariat does not cease the class struggle after it has captured political power, but continues it until classes are abolished—of course, under different circumstances, in different form and by different means.

And what does the "abolition of classes" mean? All those who call themselves socialists recognise this as the ultimate goal of socialism, but by no means all give thought to its significance. Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy.

Clearly, in order to abolish classes completely, it is not enough to overthrow the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, not enough to abolish *their* rights of ownership; it is necessary also to abolish *all* private ownership of the means of production, it is necessary to abolish the distinction between town and country, as well as the distinction between manual workers and brain workers. This requires a very long period of time. In order to achieve this an enormous step forward must be taken in developing the productive forces; it is necessary

to overcome the resistance (frequently passive, which is particularly stubborn and particularly difficult to overcome) of the numerous survivals of small-scale production; it is necessary to overcome the enormous force of habit and conservatism which are connected with these survivals.

The assumption that all "working people" are equally capable of doing this work would be on empty phrase, or the illusion of an antediluvian, pre-Marxist socialist; for this ability does not come of itself, but grows historically, and grows only out of the material conditions of large-scale capitalist production. This ability, at the beginning of the road from capitalism to socialism, is possessed by the proletariat alone. It is capable of fulfilling the gigantic task that confronts it, first, because it is the strongest and most advanced class in civilised societies; secondly, because in the most developed countries it constitutes the majority of the population, and thirdly, because in backward capitalist countries, like Russia, the majority of the population consists of semi-proletarians, i.e., of people who regularly live in a proletarian way part of the year, who regularly earn a part of their means of subsistence as wage-workers in capitalist enterprises.

Those who try to solve the problems involved in the transition from capitalism to socialism on the basis of general talk about liberty, equality, democracy in general, equality of labour democracy, etc. (as Kautsky, Martov and other heroes of the Berne yellow International do), thereby only reveal their petty-bourgeois, philistine nature and ideologically slavishly follow in the wake of the bourgeoisie. The correct solution of this problem can be found only in a concrete study of the specific relations between the specific class which has conquered political power, namely, the proletariat, and the whole non-proletarian, and also semi-proletarian, mass of the working population—relations which do not take shape in fantastically harmonious, "ideal" conditions, but in the real conditions of the frantic resistance of the bourgeoisie which assumes many and diverse forms.

The vast majority of the population—and all the more so of the working population—of any capitalist country, including Russia, have thousands of times experienced, themselves and through their kith and kin, the oppression of capital, the plunder and every sort of tyranny it perpetrates. The imperialist war, i.e., the slaughter of ten million people in order to decide whether British or German capital was to have supremacy in plundering the whole world, has greatly intensified these ordeals, has increased and deepened them, and has made the people realise their meaning. Hence the inevitable sympathy displayed by the vast majority of the population, particularly the working people, for the proletariat, because it is with heroic courage and revolutionary ruthlessness throwing off the yoke of capital, overthrowing the exploiters, suppressing their resistance, and shedding its blood to pave the road for the creation of the new society, in which there will be no room for exploiters.

Great and inevitable as may be their petty-bourgeois vacillations and their tendency to go back to bourgeois "order," under the "wing" of the bourgeoisie, the non-proletarian and semi-proletarian mass of the working population cannot but recognise the moral and political authority of the proletariat, who are not only overthrowing the exploiters and suppressing their resistance, but are building a new and higher social bond, a social discipline, the discipline of class-conscious and united working people, who know no yoke and no authority except the authority of their own unity, of their own, more class-conscious, bold, solid, revolutionary and steadfast vanguard.

In order to achieve victory, in order to build and consolidate socialism, the proletariat must fulfil a twofold or dual task: first, it must, by its supreme heroism in the revolutionary struggle against capital, win over the entire mass of the working and exploited people; it must win them over, organise them and lead them in the struggle to overthrow the bourgeoisie and utterly suppress their resistance. Secondly, it must lead the whole mass of the working and exploited people, as well as all the petty-bourgeois groups, on to the road of new

economic development, towards the creation of a new social bond, a new labour discipline, a new organisation of labour, which will combine the last word in science and capitalist technology with the mass association of class-conscious workers creating large-scale socialist industry.

The second task is more difficult than the first, for it cannot possibly be fulfilled by single acts of heroic fervour; it requires the most prolonged, most persistent and most difficult mass heroism in *plain, everyday* work. But this task is more essential than the first, because, in the last analysis, the deepest source of strength for victories over the bourgeoisie and the sole guarantee of the durability and permanence of these victories can only be a new and higher mode of social production, the substitution of large-scale socialist production for capitalist and petty-bourgeois production.

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"Communist subbotniks" are of such enormous historical significance precisely because they demonstrate the conscious and voluntary initiative of the workers in developing the productivity of labour, in adopting a new labour discipline, in creating socialist conditions of economy and life.

J. Jacoby, one of the few, in fact it would be more correct to say one of the exceptionally rare, German bourgeois democrats who, after the lessons of 1870-71, went over not to chauvinism or national-liberalism, but to socialism, once said that the formation of a single grade trade union was of greater historical importance than the battle of Sadowa. This is true. The battle of Sadowa decided the supremacy of one of two bourgeois monarchies, the Austrian or the Prussian, in creating a German national capitalist state. The formation of one trade union was a small step towards the world victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie. And we may similarly say that the first communist subbotnik, organised by the workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway in Moscow on May 10, 1919, was of greater historical significance than any of the victories of Hindenburg, or of Foch and the British, in the 1914-18 imperialist war. The victories of the imperialists mean the slaughter of millions of workers for the sake of the profits of the Anglo-American and French multimillionaires, they are the atrocities of doomed capitalism, bloated with over-eating and rotting alive. The communist subbotnik organised by the workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway is one of the cells of the new, socialist society, which brings to all the peoples of the earth emancipation from the yoke of capital and from wars.

The bourgeois gentlemen and their hangers-on, including the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are wont to regard themselves as the representatives of "public opinion," naturally jeer at the hopes of the Communists, call those hopes "a baobab tree in a mignonette pot," sneer at the insignificance of the number of subbotniks compared with the vast number of cases of thieving, idleness, lower productivity, spoilage of raw materials and finished goods, etc. Our reply to these gentlemen is that if the bourgeois intellectuals had dedicated their knowledge to assisting the working people instead of giving it to the Russian and foreign capitalists in order to restore their power, the revolution would have proceeded more rapidly and more peacefully. But this is utopian, for the issue is decided by the class struggle, and the majority of the intellectuals gravitate towards the bourgeoisie. Not with the assistance of the intellectuals will the proletariat achieve victory, but in spite of their opposition (at least in the majority of cases), removing those of them who are incorrigibly bourgeois, reforming, re-educating and subordinating the waverers, and gradually winning ever larger sections of them to its side. Gloating over the difficulties and setbacks of the revolution, sowing panic, preaching a return to the past—these are all weapons and methods of class struggle of the bourgeois intellectuals. The proletariat will not allow itself to be deceived by them.

If we get down to brass tacks, however, has it ever happened in history that a new mode of production has taken root immediately, without a long succession of setbacks, blunders and relapses? Half a century after the abolition of serfdom there were still quite a number of survivals of serfdom in the Russian countryside. Half a century after the abolition of slavery in America the position of the Negroes was still very often one of semi-slavery. The bourgeois intellectuals, including the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, are true to themselves in serving capital and in continuing to use absolutely false arguments—before the proletarian revolution they accused us of being utopian; after the revolution they demand that we wipe out all traces of the past with fantastic rapidity!

We are not utopians, however, and we know the real value of bourgeois "arguments;" we also know that for some time after the revolution traces of the old ethics will inevitably predominate over the young shoots of the new. When the new has just been born the old always remains stronger than it for some time; this is always the case in nature and in social life. Jeering at the feebleness of the young shoots of the new order, cheap scepticism of the intellectuals and the like—these are, essentially, methods of bourgeois class struggle against the proletariat, a defence of capitalism against socialism. We must carefully study the feeble new shoots, we must devote the greatest attention to them, do everything to promote their growth and "nurse" them. Some of them will inevitably perish. We cannot vouch that precisely the "communist subbotniks" will play a particularly important role. But that is not the point. The point is to foster each and every shoot of the new; and life will select the most viable. If the Japanese scientist, in order to help mankind vanquish syphilis, had the patience to test six hundred and five preparations before he developed a six hundred and sixth which met definite requirements, then those who want to solve a more difficult problem, namely, to vanquish capitalism, must have the perseverance to try hundreds and thousands of new methods, means and weapons of struggle in order to elaborate the most suitable of them.

The "communist subbotniks" are so important because they were initiated by workers who were by no means placed in exceptionally good conditions, by workers of various specialties, and some with no speciality at all, just unskilled labourers, who are living under *ordinary*, i.e., *exceedingly hard*, conditions. We all know very well the main cause of the decline in the productivity of labour that is to be observed not only in Russia, but all over the world; it is ruin and impoverishment, embitterment and weariness caused by the imperialist war, sickness and malnutrition. The latter is first in importance. Starvation—that is the cause. And in order to do away with starvation, productivity of labour must be raised in agriculture, in transport and in industry. So, we get a sort of vicious circle: in order to raise productivity of labour we must save ourselves from starvation, and in order to save ourselves from starvation we must raise productivity of labour.

We know that in practice such contradictions are solved by breaking the vicious circle, by bringing about a radical change in the temper of the people, by the heroic initiative of the individual groups which often plays a decisive role against the background of such a radical change. The unskilled labourers and railway workers of Moscow (of course, we have in mind the majority of them, and not a handful of profiteers, officials and other whiteguards) are working people who are living in desperately hard conditions. They are constantly underfed, and now, before the new harvest is gathered, with the general worsening of the food situation, they are actually starving. And yet these starving workers, surrounded by the malicious counter-revolutionary agitation of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, are organising "communist subbotniks," working overtime *without any pay*, and achieving an *enormous increase in the productivity of labour* in spite of the fact that they are weary, tormented, and exhausted by malnutrition. Is this not supreme hero-ism? Is this not the beginning of a change of momentous significance?

In the last analysis, productivity of labour is the most important, the principal thing for the victory of the new social system. Capitalism created a productivity of labour unknown under serfdom. Capitalism can be utterly vanquished, and will be utterly vanquished by socialism creating a new and much higher productivity of labour. This is a very difficult matter and must take a long time; but *it has been started*, and that is the main thing. If in starving Moscow, in the summer of 1919, the starving workers who had gone through four trying years of imperialist war and another year and a half of still more trying civil war could start this great work, how will things develop later when we triumph in the civil war and win peace?

Communism is the higher productivity of labour—compared with that existing under capitalism—of voluntary, class-conscious and united workers employing advanced techniques. Communist subbotniks are extraordinarily valuable as the *actual* beginning of *communism*; and this is a very rare thing, because we are in a stage when “only the *first steps* in the transition from capitalism to communism are being taken” (as our Party Programme quite rightly says).

Communism begins when the *rank-and-file workers* display an enthusiastic concern that is undaunted by arduous toil to increase the productivity of labour, husband *every pood of grain, coal, iron* and other products, which do not accrue to the workers personally or to their “close” kith and kin, but to their “distant” kith and kin, i.e., to society as a whole, to tens and hundreds of millions of people united first in one socialist state, and then in a union of Soviet republics.

In *Capital*, Karl Marx ridicules the pompous and grandiloquent bourgeois-democratic great charter of liberty and the rights of man, ridicules all this phrase-mongering about liberty, equality and fraternity in *general*, which dazzles the petty bourgeois and philistines of all countries, including the present despicable heroes of the despicable Berne International. Marx contrasts these pompous declarations of rights to the plain, modest, practical, simple manner in which the question is presented by the proletariat—the legislative enactment of a shorter working day is a typical example of such treatment. The aptness and profundity of Marx’s observation become the clearer and more obvious to us the more the content of the proletarian revolution unfolds. The “formulas” of genuine communism differ from the pompous, intricate, and solemn phraseology of the Kautskys, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries and their beloved “brethren” of Berne in that they reduce everything to the *conditions of labour*. Less chatter about “labour democracy,” about “liberty, equality and fraternity,” about “government by the people,” and all such stuff; the class-conscious workers and peasants of our day see through these pompous phrases of the bourgeois intellectual and discern the trickery as easily as a person of ordinary common sense and experience, when glancing at the irreproachably “polished” features and immaculate appearance of the “fain fellow, dontcher know,” immediately and unerringly put him down as “in all probability, a scoundrel.”

Fewer pompous phrases, more plain, *everyday* work, concern for the pood of grain and the pood of coal! More concern about providing this pood of grain and pood of coal needed by the hungry workers and ragged and barefoot peasants *not by haggling*, not in a capitalist manner, but by the conscious, voluntary, boundlessly heroic labour of plain working men like the unskilled labourers and railwaymen of the Moscow-Kazan line.

We must all admit that vestiges of the bourgeois-intellectual phrase-mongering approach to questions of the revolution are in evidence at every step, everywhere, even in our own ranks. Our press, for example, does little to fight these rotten survivals of the rotten, bourgeois-democratic past; it does little to foster the simple, modest, ordinary but viable shoots of genuine communism.

Take the position of women. In this field, not a single democratic party in the world, not even in the most advanced bourgeois republic, has done in decades so much as a hundredth part of what we did in our very first year in power. We really razed to the ground the infamous laws placing women in a position of inequality, restricting divorce and surrounding it with disgusting formalities, denying recognition to children born out of wedlock, enforcing a search for their fathers, etc., laws numerous survivals of which, to the shame of the bourgeoisie and of capitalism, are to be found in all civilised countries. We have a thousand times the right to be proud of what we have done in this field. But the more *thoroughly* we have cleared the ground of the lumber of the old, bourgeois laws and institutions, the clearer it is to us that we have only cleared the ground to build on but are not yet building.

Notwithstanding all the laws emancipating woman, she continues to be a *domestic slave*, because *petty housework* crushes, strangles, stultifies and degrades her, chains her to the kitchen and the nursery, and she wastes her labour on barbarously unproductive, petty, nerve-racking, stultifying and crushing drudgery. The real *emancipation of women*, real communism, will begin only where and when an all-out struggle begins (led by the proletariat wielding the state power) against this petty housekeeping, or rather when its *wholesale transformation* into a large-scale socialist economy begins.

Do we in practice pay sufficient attention to this question, which in theory every Communist considers indisputable? Of course not. 'Do we take proper care of the *shoots* of communism which already exist in this sphere?' Again the answer is *no*. Public catering establishments, nurseries, kindergartens—here we have examples of these shoots, here we have the simple, everyday means, involving nothing pompous, grandiloquent or ceremonial, which can *really emancipate* women, really lessen and abolish their inequality with men as regards their role in social production and public life. These means are not new, they (like all the material prerequisites for socialism) were created by large-scale capitalism. But under capitalism they remained, first, a rarity, and secondly—which is particularly important—either *profit-making* enterprises, with all the worst features of speculation, profiteering, cheating and fraud, or "acrobatics of bourgeois charity," which the best workers rightly hated and despised.

There is no doubt that the number of these institution in our country has increased enormously and that they are *beginning* to change in character. There is no doubt that we have far more *organising talent* among the working and peasant women than we are aware of, that we have far more people than we know of who can organise practical work, with the co-operation of large numbers of workers and of still larger numbers of consumers, without that abundance of talk, fuss, squabbling and chatter about plans, systems, etc., with which our big-headed "intellectuals" or half-baked "Communists" are "affected." But we *do not nurse* these shoots of the new as we should.

Look at the bourgeoisie. How very well they know how to advertise what *they* need! See how millions of copies of *their* newspapers extol what the capitalists regard as "model" enterprises, and how "model" bourgeois institutions are made an object of national pride! Our press does not take the trouble, or hardly ever, to describe the best catering establishments, or nurseries, in order, by daily insistence, to get some of them turned into models of their kind. It does not give them enough publicity, does not describe in detail the saving in human labour, the conveniences for the consumer, the economy of products, the emancipation of women from domestic slavery, the improvement in sanitary conditions, that can be achieved with *exemplary communist work* and extended to the whole of society, to all working people.

Exemplary production, exemplary communist subbotniks, exemplary care and conscientiousness in procuring and distributing every pood of grain, exemplary catering establishments, exemplary cleanliness in such-and-such a workers' house, in such-and-such a block,

should all receive ten times more attention and care from our press, as well as from every workers' and peasants' organisation, than they receive now. All these are shoots of communism, and it is our common and primary duty to nurse them. Difficult as our food and production situation is, in the year and a half of Bolshevik rule there has been undoubted progress *all along the line*: grain procurements have increased from 30 million poods (from August 1, 1917 to August 1, 1918) to 100 million poods (from August 1, 1918 to May 1, 1919); vegetable gardening has expanded, the margin of unsown land has diminished, railway transport has begun to improve despite the enormous fuel difficulties, and so on. Against this general background, and with the support of the proletarian state power, the shoots of communism will not wither; they will grow and blossom into complete communism.

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We must give very great thought to the significance of the "communist subbotniks," in order that we may draw all the very important practical lessons that follow from this great beginning.

The first and main lesson is that this beginning must be given every assistance. The word "commune" is being handled much too freely. Any kind of enterprise started by Communists or with their participation is very often at once declared to be a "commune," it being not infrequently forgotten that this *very honourable title* must be *won* by prolonged and persistent effort, by *practical* achievement in genuine communist development.

That is why, in my opinion, the decision that has matured in the minds of the majority of the members of the Central Executive Committee to *repeal* the decree of the Council of People's Commissars, as far as it pertains to the title "consumers' communes," is quite right. Let the title be simpler—and, incidentally, the defects and shortcomings of the *initial* stages of the new organisational work will not be blamed on the "communes," but (as in all fairness they should be) on *bad* Communists. It would be a good thing to eliminate the word "commune" from *common* use, to prohibit every Tom, Dick and Harry from grabbing at it, or to *allow this title to be borne only* by genuine communes, which have really demonstrated in practice (and have proved by the unanimous recognition of the whole of the surrounding population) that they are capable of organising their work in a communist manner. First show that you are capable of working without remuneration in the interests of society, in the interests of all the working people, show that you are capable of "working in a revolutionary way," that you are capable of raising productivity of labour, of organising the work in an exemplary manner, and then hold out your hand for the honourable title "commune!"

In this respect, the "communist subbotniks" are a most valuable exception; for the unskilled labourers and railwaymen of the Moscow-Kazan Railway *first* demonstrated by *deeds* that they are capable of working like *Communists*, and then adopted the title of "communist subbotniks" for their undertaking. We must see to it and make sure that in future anyone who calls his enterprise, institution or undertaking a commune *without having proved* this by hard work and *practical success in prolonged effort*, by exemplary and truly communist organisation, is mercilessly ridiculed and pilloried as a charlatan or a windbag.

That great beginning, the "communist subbotniks," must also be utilised for another purpose, namely, to *purge* the Party. In the early period following the revolution, when the mass of "honest" and philistine-minded people was particularly timorous, and when the bourgeois intellectuals to a man, including, of course, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, played the lackey to the bourgeoisie and carried on sabotage, it was absolutely inevitable that adventurers and other pernicious elements should hitch themselves to the ruling party. There never has been, and there never can be, a revolution without that.

The whole point is that the ruling party should be able, relying on a sound and strong advanced class, to purge its ranks.

We started this work long ago. It must be continued steadily and untiringly. The mobilisation of Communists for the war helped us in this respect: the cowards and scoundrels fled from the Party's ranks. Good riddance! *Such* a reduction in the Party's membership means an *enormous increase* in its strength and weight. We must continue the purge, and that new beginning, the "communist subbotniks," must be utilised for this purpose: members should be accepted into the Party only after six months', say, "trial," or "probation," at "working in a revolutionary way." A similar test should be demanded of *all* members of the Party who joined after October 25, 1917, and who have not prove by some special work or service that they are absolutely reliable, loyal and capable of being Communists.

The purging of the Party, through the steadily *increasing demands* it makes in regard to working in a genuinely communist way, will improve the state *apparatus* and will bring much nearer the *final transition* of the peasants to the side of the revolutionary proletariat.

Incidentally, the "communist subbotniks" have thrown a remarkably strong light on the class character of the state apparatus under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Central Committee of the Party drafts a letter on "working in a revolutionary way." The idea is suggested by the Central Committee of a party with from 100,000 to 200,000 members (I assume that is the number that will remain after a thorough purging; at present the membership is larger).

The idea is taken up by the workers organised in trade unions. In Russia and the Ukraine they number about four million. The overwhelming majority of them are for the state power of the proletariat, for proletarian dictatorship. Two hundred thousand and four million—such is the ratio of the "gear-wheels," if one may so express it. Then follow the *tens of millions* of peasants, who are divided into three main groups: the most numerous and the one standing closest to the proletariat is that of the semi-proletarians or poor peasants; then come the middle peasants, and lastly the numerically very small group of kulaks or rural bourgeoisie.

As long as it is possible to trade in grain and to make profit out of famine, the peasant will remain (and this will for some time be inevitable under the dictatorship of the proletariat) a semi-working man, a semi-profiteer. As a profiteer he is hostile to us, hostile to the proletarian state; he is inclined to agree with the bourgeoisie and their faithful lackeys, up to and including the Menshevik Sher or the Socialist-Revolutionary B. Chernenkov, who stand for freedom to trade in grain. But *as a working man*, the peasant is a friend of the proletarian state, a most loyal ally of the worker in the struggle against the landowner and against the capitalist. As working men, the peasants, the vast mass of them, the peasant millions, support the state "machine" which is headed by the one or two hundred thousand Communists of the proletarian vanguard, and which consists of millions of organised proletarians.

A state more democratic, in the true sense of the word, one more closely connected with the working and exploited people, has *never yet existed*.

It is precisely proletarian work such as that put into "communist subbotniks" that will win the complete respect and love of peasants for the proletarian state. Such work and such work alone will completely convince the peasant that we are right, that communism is right, and make him our devoted ally, and, hence, will lead to the complete elimination of our food difficulties, to the complete victory of communism over capitalism in the matter of the production and distribution of grain, to the unqualified consolidation of communism.



## EXHORTATION TO THE PARTY ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DENIKIN

July 9, 1919

*The critical period of the Civil War in the summer of 1919 presented enormous problems for the beleaguered Bolshevik government, not the least in terms of manpower. The Central Committee, in an appeal written by Lenin, sent instructions to lower level party organizations in the form of this exhortation. Reflecting the broader problems of the party in spreading its thin pool of experienced workers across all needs, the Central Committee called for major reassignment of party workers to war needs, closing down temporarily other activities if need be. Instances of betrayal by former tsarist officers serving in the Red Army required Lenin once more to stress the importance of military specialists, but he coupled it with a warning against counterrevolutionaries from among the bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia.*

ALL OUT FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST DENIKIN!  
LETTER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST  
PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS) TO PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

Comrades,

This is one of the most critical, probably even the most critical moment for the socialist revolution. Those who defend the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, in Russia and abroad (primarily in Britain and France) are making a desperate effort to restore the power of those who seize the results of the people's labour, the landowners and exploiters of Russia, in order to bolster up their power, which is waning all over the world. The British and French capitalists have failed in their plan to conquer the Ukraine using their own troops; they have failed in their support of Kolchak in Siberia; the Red Army, heroically advancing in the Urals with the help of the Urals workers who are rising to a man, is nearing Siberia to liberate it from the incredible tyranny and brutality of the capitalists who rule there. Lastly, the British and French imperialists have failed in their plan to seize Petrograd by means of a counter-revolutionary conspiracy with the participation of Russian monarchists, Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries (not excluding even Left Socialist-Revolutionaries).

The foreign capitalists are now making a desperate effort to restore the yoke of capital by means of an onslaught by Denikin, whom they have supplied with officers, shells, tanks, etc., etc., as they once did Kolchak.

All the forces of the workers and peasants, all the forces of the Soviet Republic, must be harnessed to repulse Denikin's onslaught and to defeat him, without checking the Red Army's victorious advance into the Urals and Siberia.

That is the

## MAIN TASK OF THE MOMENT

All Communists first and foremost, all sympathisers with them, all honest workers and peasants, all Soviet officials must *pull themselves together like soldiers* and concentrate to *the maximum their work*, their efforts and their concern *directly on the tasks of the war*, on the speedy repulse of Denikin's attack, curtailing and rearranging all their other activities to allow for this task.

The Soviet Republic is besieged by the enemy. It must become a *single military camp*, not in word but in deed.

All the work of all institutions must be adapted to the war and placed on a military footing!

Collegiate methods are essential for the conduct of the affairs of the workers' and peasants' state. But any expansion of these methods, any distortion of them resulting in red tape and irresponsibility, any conversion of collegiate bodies into talk-shops is a supreme evil, an evil which must be halted at all costs as quickly as possible and by whatever the means.

Collegiate methods must not exceed an absolutely indispensable minimum in respect both to the number of members in the committees and to the efficient conduct of work;

"speechifying" must be prohibited, opinions must be exchanged as rapidly as possible and confined to information and precisely formulated practical proposals.

Whenever there is the slightest possibility, such methods must be reduced to the briefest discussion of only the most important questions in the narrowest collegiate bodies, while the *practical management* of institutions, enterprises, undertakings or tasks should be entrusted to *one comrade*, known for his firmness, resolution, boldness and ability to conduct practical affairs and who enjoys the greatest confidence. At any rate, and under all circumstances without exception, collegiate management must be accompanied by the precise definition of the personal responsibility of *every* individual for a *precisely* defined job. To refer to collegiate methods as an excuse for irresponsibility is a most dangerous evil, threatening all who have not had very extensive experience in efficient collective work; in the army it all too often leads to inevitable disaster, chaos, panic, division of authority and defeat.

A no less dangerous evil is organisational fuss or organisational fantasies. The reorganisation of work necessitated by the war must under no circumstances lead to the reorganisation of institutions, still less to the hasty formation of new institutions. That is absolutely impermissible and would only lead to chaos. The reorganisation of work should consist in suspending for a time institutions which are not absolutely essential, or in reducing their size to a certain extent. But all war work must be conducted *entirely and exclusively through already existing* military institutions, by improving, strengthening, expanding and supporting them. The creation of special "defence committees" or "revcoms" (revolutionary or revolutionary military committees) is permissible, first, only by way of exception, secondly, only with the approval of the military authority concerned or the superior Soviet authority, and, thirdly, only provided this last condition is complied with.

THE TRUTH ABOUT KOLCHAK AND DENIKIN MUST BE EXPLAINED TO THE PEOPLE. Kolchak and Denikin are the chief, and the only serious, enemies of the Soviet Republic. If it were not for the help they are getting from the Entente (Britain, France, America) they would have collapsed long ago. It is only the help of the Entente which makes them strong. Nevertheless, they are still forced to deceive the people, to pretend from time to time that they support "democracy," a "constituent assembly," "government by the people," etc. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are only too willing to be duped.

The truth about Kolchak (and his double, Denikin) has now been revealed in full. The shooting of *tens of thousands* of workers. The shooting even of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. The flogging of peasants of entire districts. The public flogging of women. The absolutely unbridled power of the officers, the sons of landowners. Endless looting. Such is the truth about Kolchak and Denikin. Increasing numbers of people even among the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who themselves betrayed the workers and sided with Kolchak and Denikin, are forced to admit this truth.

All our agitation and propaganda must serve to inform the people of the truth. It must be explained that the alternative is either Kolchak and Denikin or Soviet power, the power (dictatorship) of the workers. There is no middle course; there can be no middle course. Particular use must be made of the testimony of non-Bolshevik eyewitnesses, of Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, and non-party people who *have been* in the areas overrun by Kolchak or Denikin. Let every worker and peasant know what the issue of the struggle is, what awaits him in the event of a victory for Kolchak or Denikin.

#### WORK AMONG MEN CALLED UP FOR SERVICE

One of our chief concerns must now be work among those liable to mobilisation, in aid of mobilisation, and among those already mobilised. Wherever mobilised men are concentrated, or where there are garrisons, and especially training depots, etc., every single Communist and sympathiser must be brought into action. They must all without exception

unite and work, some daily, others, say, four or eight hours per week, in aid of mobilisation and among mobilised men, among the soldiers of the local garrison; it must be done in a properly organised manner, of course, each person being assigned appropriate work by the local Party organisation and the military authorities.

Non-party people or members of parties other than the Communist Party are naturally not in a position to carry on ideological work against Denikin or Kolchak. But to release them for that reason from all work would be impermissible. Every means must be sought that would compel the whole population (and the *wealthier sections*, both in town and country, in the first place) to contribute their share, in one form or another, to help mobilisation or the mobilised.

Measures to further the quickest and most effective training of the mobilised should form a special category of aid. The Soviet government is calling up all ex-officers, non-commissioned officers, etc. The Communist Party, as well as all sympathisers and all workers, must assist the workers' and peasants' state, first, by helping to round up all ex-officers, non-commissioned officers, etc., who do not report for service, and, secondly, by organising, under the control of the Party organisation or attached to it, groups of those who have had theoretical or practical (e.g., in the imperialist war) military training and who are capable of doing their share.

#### WORK AMONG DESERTERS

An obvious change for the better has latterly taken place in the fight against desertion. In a number of gubernias deserters have begun to return to the army *en masse*; it is no exaggeration to say that deserters are flocking to the Red Army. The reasons are, first, that Party comrades are working more efficiently and systematically, and, secondly, the peasants' growing realisation that Kolchak and Denikin mean the restoration of a regime which is worse than the tsarist, the restoration of *slavery* for the workers and peasants, and of floggings, robbery and insults on the part of the officers and scions of the nobility.

We must therefore everywhere lay special stress on the work among deserters to bring them back into the army, and must *spare no effort* in this work. That is one of the primary and urgent tasks of the day.

Incidentally, the fact that deserters can be influenced by persuasion and that the persuasion can be *effective* shows that the workers' state has a *special* attitude towards the peasants, and in this it differs from the landowner or capitalist state. The rule of the bludgeon or the rule of hunger—that is what constitutes the sole source of discipline of the latter two forms of state. A *different* source of discipline is possible in the case of the workers' state, or the dictatorship of the proletariat—that of persuasion of the peasants by the workers, a comradely alliance between them. When you hear the accounts of eyewitnesses that in such-and-such a gubernia (Ryazan, for instance) thousands upon thousands of deserters are returning voluntarily, that the appeal at meetings to "comrades deserters" sometimes has a success which beggars all description, you begin to realise how much untapped *strength* there is in this comradely alliance between workers and peasants. The peasant has his *prejudice*, which makes him inclined to support the capitalist, the Socialist-Revolutionary, and "freedom to trade," but he also has his *sound judgement*, which is impelling him more and more towards an alliance with the workers.

#### DIRECT AID TO THE ARMY

What our army needs most is *supplies*—clothing, footwear, arms, shells. With the country impoverished as it is, an immense effort has to be made to satisfy the army's needs, and it is only the assistance which the capitalist robbers of Britain, France and America are so lavishly rendering Kolchak and Denikin that saves them from inevitable disaster due to shortage of supplies.

But impoverished though Russia is, she still has endless resources which we have not yet utilised, and often have shown *no ability* to utilise. There are still many undisclosed or

uninspected military stores, plenty of production potentialities which are being overlooked, partly owing to the deliberate sabotage of officials, partly owing to red tape, bureaucracy, inefficiency and incompetence—all those “sins of the past” which so inevitably and so drastically weigh upon every revolution which makes a “leap” into a new social order.

Direct aid to the army in this respect is particularly important. The institutions in charge of it are particularly in need of “fresh blood,” of outside assistance, of the voluntary, vigorous and heroic *initiative* of the workers and peasants *in the localities*.

We must appeal as widely as possible to the initiative of all class-conscious workers and peasants, and of all Soviet officials; we must test in different localities and in different fields of work *different* forms of assistance to the army in this respect. “Work in a revolutionary way” is far less in evidence here than in other spheres, yet “work in a revolutionary way” is needed here *far more*.

The collection of arms from the population is an integral part of this work. It is natural that plenty of arms should have been hidden by the peasants and the bourgeoisie in a country which has been through four years of imperialist war followed by two people’s revolutions—it was inevitable that this should happen. But we must combat it *with all our might* now, in face of Denikin’s menacing onslaught. Whoever conceals or helps to conceal arms is guilty of a grave crime against the workers and peasants and deserves to be shot, for he is responsible for the death of thousands upon thousands of the finest Red Army men, who not infrequently perish only because of a shortage of arms at the fronts.

The Petrograd comrades succeeded in unearthing thousands and thousands of rifles when they conducted mass searches in a strictly organised way. The rest of Russia must not lag behind Petrograd and must at all costs overtake and outstrip it.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that the largest numbers of rifles are hidden by the peasants, and often without the least evil intention, but solely from an ingrained distrust of any “state,” etc. If we have been able to do much, very much (in the best gubernias) by means of *persuasion*, skilful agitation and a proper approach to get deserters to return to the Red Army voluntarily, there can be no doubt that just as much, if not more, can be done, and should be done, to secure a voluntary return of arms.

Workers and peasants, look for concealed rifles and turn them over to the army! By doing so you will save yourselves from being massacred, shot, flogged wholesale and robbed by Kolchak and Denikin!

#### CURTAILMENT OF WORK NOT FOR THE WAR

To carry out even a part of the work briefly outlined above we shall need more and more workers, drawn, moreover, from the ranks of the most reliable, devoted and energetic Communists. But where are they to come from, bearing in mind the universal complaints about the dearth of such workers and the over-fatigue they are suffering from?

There can be no doubt that these complaints are largely justified. If anyone were to gauge exactly how thin is that stratum of advanced workers and Communists who with the support and sympathy of the worker and peasant masses have administered Russia in these last twenty months, it would seem truly incredible. Yet we administered with signal success, building socialism, overcoming unparalleled difficulties, and vanquishing enemies, directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie, that raised their heads everywhere. We have already vanquished all enemies except one—the Entente, the all-powerful imperialist bourgeoisie of Britain, France and America. And we have broken one of the arms of this enemy too—Kolchak. We are only threatened by his other arm—Denikin.

Fresh labour-power for the administration of the state and to carry out the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat are rapidly emerging in the shape of the worker and peasant youth who are most earnestly, zealously and fervidly learning, digesting the new impressions of the new order, throwing off the husk of old, capitalist and bourgeois-democratic prejudices, and moulding themselves into even firmer Communists than the older generation.

But however rapidly this new stratum may be emerging, however rapidly it may be learning and maturing in the fire of the Civil War and the frantic resistance of the bourgeoisie, all the same it cannot, in the next few months, supply us with a *trained* staff for the administration of the state. Yet it is precisely the next few months, the summer and autumn of 1919, that count, for it is essential to *decide* the struggle against Denikin, and it must be done *immediately*.

In order to obtain a large number of well-trained workers to strengthen the war effort we must *reduce in size* a whole number of branches and institutions, not doing war work, or, rather, those not directly connected with the war, but doing Soviet work; we must *reorganise* on these lines (i.e., on the lines of reduction) all institutions and enterprises which are *not absolutely indispensable*.

Take, as a case in point, the Scientific and Technological Department of the Supreme Economic Council. This is a highly valuable institution, one indispensable for the building of full-scale socialism and to account for and distribute all our scientific and technological forces properly. But is such an institution absolutely indispensable? Of course not. To assign to it people who could and should be immediately employed in urgent and absolutely indispensable communist work *in the army* or *directly* for the army would, at the present juncture, be a downright crime.

There are quite a number of such institutions and departments of institutions in the centre and in the localities. In our efforts to achieve socialism in full we had to begin to set up such institutions immediately. But we would be fools or criminals, if, in the face of Denikin's formidable attack, we were unable to *reform our ranks* in such a way as to *suspend* or *reduce everything* that is not absolutely indispensable.

We must not give way to panic or succumb to the organisational urge and must not reorganise any institutions nor close them down altogether, nor—which is particularly harmful when being done in haste—must we begin to build new institutions. What we must do is to *suspend* for three, four or five months *all* institutions or departments of institutions, both in the centre and in the localities, which are not absolutely indispensable, or, if it is not possible to suspend them altogether, *reduce* them for the same (approximately) period, reduce them to the greatest possible extent, in other words, reduce the work to an absolutely indispensable minimum.

Inasmuch as our main purpose is to secure at once a large number of well-trained, experienced, devoted tested Communists or socialist sympathisers for military work, we can incur the risk of temporarily leaving many of the heavily curtailed institutions (or departments of institutions) *without a single Communist*, of placing them exclusively in the hands of bourgeois executives. That is not a big risk, for it is only institutions which are not absolutely indispensable that are involved, and while there will certainly be a loss from the weakening of their (semi-suspended) activities, it will not be a great loss, and one which at any rate will not be fatal to us. Whereas insufficient energy in strengthening war work, and strengthening it immediately and considerably, may prove fatal to us. This must be clearly understood and all the necessary conclusions drawn from it.

If every manager of a government department or of a division of a government department in every gubernia, uyezd, etc., if every Communist nucleus, without losing a moment, asks, is such-and-such an institution, such-and-such a department absolutely indispensable, shall we perish if we suspend it or reduce its activities by nine-tenths and leave no Communists in it at all?—if the posing of this question is followed by speedy and resolute reduction of work and withdrawal of Communists (together with their absolutely reliable assistants among the sympathisers or non-party people), in a very short time we shall have hundreds upon hundreds of persons for work in the political departments of the army, as commissars, etc. And then we shall have a very good chance of defeating Denikin, just as we have defeated the much stronger Kolchak.

## WORK IN THE FRONT ZONE

The front zone in the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic has greatly increased in the past few weeks and has undergone an extremely rapid change. This is a harbinger or concomitant of the decisive moment of the war, of its approaching concluding phase.

On the one hand, a vast front zone west of the Urals and in the Ural Mountains proper has become our front zone owing to the victories of the Red Army, the disintegration of Kolchak, and the growth of revolution in Kolchakia. On the other hand, *an even larger* zone near Petrograd and in the South has become a front zone owing to our losses, owing to the immense advance made by the enemy towards Petrograd and the advance from the South into the Ukraine and towards the centre of Russia.

Work in the front zone is assuming cardinal importance.

In the Cis-Urals area, where the Red Army is rapidly advancing, there is a natural desire among army workers—commissars, members of political departments, etc.—as well as among local workers and peasants, to settle down in the newly won localities for constructive Soviet work, a desire which is the more natural, the greater the war fatigue and the more distressful the picture of the destruction wrought by Kolchak. But nothing could be more dangerous than to yield to this desire. It would threaten to weaken our offensive, to retard it, and to increase Kolchak's chances of recovering his strength. It would be a downright crime against the revolution on our part.

Under no circumstances must a single extra worker be taken from the Eastern Army for local work! Under no circumstances can the offensive be weakened! The only chance we have of complete victory is for the entire population of the Urals area, who have experienced the horrors of Kolchak "democracy," to take part in it to a man, and to continue the offensive into Siberia until the *complete victory* of the revolution in Siberia.

Let organisational work in the Cis-Urals and the Urals area be delayed, let it proceed less intensively, being done by local, young, inexperienced and weak forces alone. We shall not perish from that. But if we *weaken* the offensive against the Urals and Siberia *we shall perish*. We must *strengthen* that offensive with the forces of the insurgent workers in the Urals, with the forces of the Cis-Urals peasants, who have now learned to their cost the meaning of the "constituent" promises of the Menshevik Maisky and the Socialist-Revolutionary Chernov, and the real meaning of these promises, i.e., *Kolchak*.

To weaken the offensive against the Urals and Siberia would be to betray the revolution, to betray the cause of the emancipation of the workers and peasants from the Kolchak yoke.

It should be remembered in connection with the work in the front zone which has only just been liberated that the main task there is to make not only the workers, but the peasants as well, put their faith in Soviet power, to explain to them in practice that Soviet power means the power of the workers and peasants, and at once to take the right course, the course adopted by the Party from the experience of twenty months of work. We must not repeat in the Urals the mistakes which were sometimes made in Great Russia and which we are rapidly learning to avoid.

In the front zone outside Petrograd and in that vast front zone which has been growing so rapidly and menacingly in the Ukraine and in the South, absolutely everything must be put on a war footing, and all work, all efforts, all thoughts subordinated to the war and only the war. Otherwise it will be impossible to repulse Denikin's attack. That is clear. And this must be clearly understood and fully put into practice.

Incidentally. A feature of Denikin's army is the large number of officers and Cossacks in it. This is an element which, having no mass force behind it, is extremely likely to engage in swift raids, in gambles, in desperate ventures, with the object of sowing panic and causing destruction for destruction's sake.

In fighting such a foe military discipline and military vigilance of the highest degree are necessary. To be caught napping or to lose one's head means losing everything. Every responsible Party and Soviet worker must bear this in mind.

Military discipline in military and all other matters! Military vigilance and strictness, and firmness in the adoption of all measures of precaution!

#### ATTITUDE TOWARDS MILITARY EXPERTS

The vast conspiracy hatched at Krasnaya Gorka and whose purpose was the surrender of Petrograd has again brought forward and with particular emphasis the question of the military experts and of combating counter-revolution in the rear. There can be no doubt that the aggravation of the food and war situation is inevitably stimulating, and will continue to stimulate in the immediate future, still greater efforts by the counter-revolutionaries (in the Petrograd plot there participated the League of Regeneration, Cadets, Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries; the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries also participated, as a separate group, it is true, but they did participate nevertheless). Nor can there be any doubt that the military experts, like the kulaks, the bourgeois intellectuals, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, will in the near future give a bigger proportion of traitors.

But it would be an irreparable mistake and unpardonable weakness of character to raise on this account the question of changing the fundamental principles of our army policy. Hundreds and hundreds of military experts are betraying us and will betray us; we will catch them and shoot them, but thousands and tens of thousands of military experts have been working for us systematically and for a long time, and without them we could not have formed the Red Army, which has grown out of the guerrilla force of evil memory, and has been able to score brilliant victories in the East. Experienced people who head our War Department rightly point out that where the Party policy in regard to the military experts and the extirpation of the guerrilla spirit has been adhered to most strictly, where discipline is firmest, where political work among the troops and the work of the commissars is conducted most thoroughly, there, generally speaking, the number of military experts inclined to betray us is the lowest, there the opportunities for those who are so inclined to carry out their designs are the slightest, there we have no laxity in the army, there its organisation and morale are best, and there we have the most victories. The guerrilla spirit, its vestiges, remnants and survivals have been the cause of immeasurably greater misfortune, disintegration, defeats, disasters and losses in men and military equipment in our army and in the Ukrainian army than all the betrayals of the military experts.

Our Party Programme, both on the general subject of bourgeois experts, and on the particular problem of one of their varieties, the military experts, has defined the policy of the Communist Party with absolute precision. Our Party is waging and will continue to wage "a relentless struggle against the pseudo-radical but actually ignorant and conceited opinion that the working people are capable of overcoming capitalism and the bourgeois social system without learning from bourgeois specialists, without making use of their services and without undergoing the *training of a lengthy period* of work side by side with them."

At the same time, of course, the Party does not make the "slightest political concession to this bourgeois section of the population," the Party suppresses and will continue "ruthlessly to suppress any counter-revolutionary attempts on its part." Naturally, whenever such an "attempt" is made or becomes more or less probable, its "ruthless suppression" requires other qualities than the deliberateness, the cautiousness of an apprentice, which are demanded for lengthy training, and which the latter inculcates. The contradiction between the attitude of people engaged in the "lengthy period of work side by side" with the military experts, and the attitude of people absorbed in the direct task of "ruthlessly suppressing a counter-revolutionary attempt" of military experts might easily lead, and does lead, to friction and conflict. The same applies to the necessary changes of personnel, the shifting around sometimes of large numbers of military experts which is necessitated by instances of counter-revolutionary "attempts," and all the more by large-scale conspiracies.

We settle, and will continue to settle, such friction and conflicts in the Party way, demanding the same of all the Party organisations and insisting that not the slightest damage

to practical work, not the slightest delay in the adoption of essential measures, not a shadow of hesitation in the observance of the established principles of our military policy be tolerated.

If some of our Party bodies adopt an incorrect tone towards the military experts (as was recently the case in Petrograd), or if in some cases "criticism" of military experts turns into direct hindrance to the systematic and persistent work of employing them, the Party immediately rectifies, and will rectify, such mistakes.

The chief and principal means of rectifying them is to intensify political work in the army and among the mobilised, to improve the work of the commissars in the army, to have more highly qualified commissars, to raise their level, to have them carry out *in practice* that which the Party Programme demands and which only too often is carried out far too inadequately, i.e., "the concentration of *all-round* control over the commanders (of the army) in the hands of the working class." Criticism of the military experts by outsiders, attempts to correct matters by "lightning raids" are too easy, and therefore hopeless and harmful. All those who recognise their political responsibility, who take the defects of our army to heart, let them join its ranks, either as privates or commanders, as political workers or commissars; let each work—every Party member will find a place suited to his abilities—inside the army organisation for its improvement.

The Soviet government has long been paying the greatest attention to making it possible for workers, and also peasants, Communists in particular, to master the art of war in all seriousness. This is being done at a number of establishments, institutions and courses, but still far too little is being done. There is still a lot of room here for personal initiative and personal energy. Communists, in particular, should persistently study the handling of machine-guns, artillery, armoured vehicles, etc., for here our backwardness is more telling, here the enemy's superiority, with his larger number of officers, is greater, here it is possible for an unreliable military expert to do grave harm, here the role of the Communist is important in the extreme.

#### THE FIGHT AGAINST COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN THE REAR

Counter-revolution is raising its head in our rear and in our midst just as it did in July of last year.

Counter-revolution has been defeated, but by no means destroyed, and is naturally taking advantage of Denikin's victories and of the aggravation of the food shortage. And, as always, in the wake of direct and open counter-revolution, in the wake of the Black Hundreds and the Cadets, whose strength lies in their capital, their direct connections with Entente imperialism, and their understanding of the inevitability of dictatorship and their ability to exercise it (on Kokchak lines)—in their wake follow the wavering, spineless Mensheviks, Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who embellish their deeds with words.

There should be no illusions on this score! What is the "nutritive medium" which engenders counter-revolutionary activities, outbreaks, conspiracies and so forth we know full well. The medium is the bourgeoisie, the bourgeois intelligentsia, the kulaks in the countryside, and, everywhere, the "non-party" public, as well as the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks. We must redouble, we must increase tenfold our watch over this medium. We must multiply tenfold our vigilance, because counter-revolutionary attempts from this quarter are absolutely inevitable, precisely at the present moment and in the near future. For this reason, too, repeated attempts to blow up bridges, to foment strikes, to engage in every kind of espionage and the like, are natural. All precautions of the most intense, systematic, repeated, wholesale and unexpected kind are essential in all centres without exception where the "nutritive medium" of the counter-revolutionaries has the least chance of existing.

In regard to the Mensheviks and the Right and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, we must draw a lesson from our most recent experience. Among their "periphery," among the public



which gravitates towards them, there is an undoubted shifting away from Kolchak and Denikin towards Soviet power. We have taken cognisance of this shift, and every time it has assumed any real shape we, on our part, have taken a step to meet it. This policy of ours we shall not change under any circumstances, and generally speaking, there will no doubt be an increase in the number of "migrants" from the type of Menshevism and Socialist-Revolutionarism which leans towards Kolchak and Denikin to the type of Menshevism and Socialist-Revolutionarism which leans towards Soviet power.

But at the present juncture the petty-bourgeois democrats, headed by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, spineless and wavering as always, are watching to see which way the wind blows, and are swinging in the direction of the victor, Denikin. This is especially true of the "political leaders" of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, of the Mensheviks (of the type of Martov and Co.), of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries (of the type of Chernov and Co.) and of their "literary groups" in general, whose members, apart from all else, are deeply offended at their political bankruptcy, and for whom hazardous ventures *against* Soviet power, therefore, have an attraction that is hardly likely to be eradicated.

We must not allow ourselves to be deceived by the words and ideology of their leaders, by their personal integrity or hypocrisy. This is important from the standpoint of their individual biographies. But it is not important from the standpoint of politics, i.e., of the relations between classes, of the relations between millions of people. Martov and Co., "in the name of the Central Committee," solemnly condemn their "activists" and threaten (eternally threaten!) to expel them from the party. But this by no means does away with the fact that the "activists" are the strongest of all among the Mensheviks, hide behind them, and carry on their work on behalf of Kolchak and Denikin. Volsky and Co. condemn Avksentyev, Chernov and Co., but this does not in the least prevent the latter from being stronger than Volsky, nor does it prevent Chernov from saying, "If it is not we who are to overthrow the Bolsheviks, and not now, then who is, and when?" The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries may "work independently" without any agreement with the reactionaries, with the Chernovs, but actually they are just as much allies of Denikin and pawns in *his* game as the late Left Socialist-Revolutionary Muravyov, the ex-commander-in-chief, who for "ideological" reasons opened the front to the Czechoslovaks and to Kolchak.

Martov, Volsky and Co. fancy themselves "superior" to both contending sides; they fancy themselves capable of creating a "third side."

This desire, even when it is sincere, still remains the illusion of the petty-bourgeois democrat, who to this day, seventy years after 1848, has still not learned the most elementary thing, namely, that in a capitalist environment only the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat is possible, and that no third course can exist. Martov and Co. will evidently die with this illusion. That is their affair. And it is our affair to remember that in practice vacillations on the part of these people are inevitable, today in the direction of Denikin, tomorrow in the direction of the Bolsheviks. And today we must do the task of *this* day.

Our task is to put the question bluntly. What is better? To ferret out, to imprison, sometimes even to shoot hundreds of traitors from among the Cadets, non-party people, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who "come out" (some with arms in hand, others with conspiracies, others still with agitation against mobilisation, like the Menshevik printers and railwaymen, etc.) *against* Soviet power, *in other words, in favour of Denikin?* Or to allow matters to reach such a pass that Kolchak and Denikin are able to slaughter, shoot and flog to death tens of thousands of workers and peasants? The choice is not difficult to make.

That is how the question stands, and not otherwise. Whoever has not yet understood this, whoever is capable of whining over the "iniquity" of such a decision, must be given up as hopeless and held up to public ridicule and shame.

## THE POPULATION MUST BE MOBILISED FOR WAR TO A MAN

The Soviet Republic is a fortress besieged by world capital. We can concede the right to use it as a refuge from Kolchak, and the right to live in it generally, only to those who take an active part in the war and help us in every way. Hence our right and our duty to mobilise the whole population for the war to a man, some for army work in the direct meaning of the term, others for subsidiary activities of every kind in aid of the war.

To carry this out in full, an ideal organisation is required. And since our government organisation is very far from perfect (which is not in the least surprising in view of its youth, its novelty and the extraordinary difficulties which accompany its development), to attempt at once and on a wide scale anything complete or even very considerable in this sphere would be a most dangerous indulgence in fantastic organisational schemes.

But much can be done in a partial way to bring us nearer to this ideal, and the "initiative" shown by our Party workers and Soviet officials in this respect is very, very far from enough.

It will suffice here to raise this question and to draw the attention of comrades to it. There is no need to give any specific instructions or proposals.

Let us only observe that the petty-bourgeois democrats who stand nearest to the Soviets and who call themselves, by force of habit, socialists—some of the "Left Mensheviks and the like, for example—are particularly disposed to wax indignant at the "barbaric," in their opinion, practice of taking hostages.

Let them wax indignant, but unless this is done war cannot be waged, and when the danger grows acute the use of this means must be extended and multiplied in every sense. Not infrequently, for instance, Menshevik or yellow printers, higher railway employees or secret profiteers, kulaks, the wealthy sections of the urban (and rural) population and similar elements look upon defence against Kolchak and Denikin with an infinitely criminal and infinitely brazen attitude of indifference which grows into sabotage. Lists of such groups must be drawn up (or they must be compelled themselves to form groups in which each answers for everybody), and they must not only be put to work digging trenches, as is sometimes practised, but assigned to the most diverse and comprehensive duties for material aid to the Red Army.

The fields of the Red Army men will be better cultivated, the supply of food, tobacco and other necessities to the Red Army men will be better arranged, the danger to the lives of thousands upon thousands of workers and peasants resulting from a single conspiracy, etc., will be considerably reduced if we employ this method more widely, more comprehensively and more skilfully.

## "WORK IN A REVOLUTIONARY WAY"

Summing up what was said above, we arrive at a simple conclusion. What is demanded immediately and in the course of the next few months of all Communists, of all class-conscious workers and peasants, of everyone who does not want to see Kolchak and Denikin win, is an extraordinary accession of energy; what is needed is "work in a revolutionary way."

The starving, exhausted and worn-out Moscow railwaymen, both skilled and unskilled, have for the sake of victory over Kolchak inaugurated "communist subbotniks"—work without pay for several hours a week to continue until victory over Kolchak is complete—and have, moreover, developed unprecedented labour productivity, exceeding the usual productivity many times over; this goes to show that much, very much can still be done.

And we must do it.

Then we shall win.

## A MENSHEVIK PROGRAM FOR RUSSIA

July 12, 1919

*The development of civil war posed a terrible dilemma for the non-Bolshevik socialist parties. On the one hand they opposed most of the Bolsheviks' actions from the October Revolution onward and were in fact subjected to various repressive measures, but on the other feared the victory of the White armies as leading to a conservative counterrevolution. This was especially true of the Mensheviks, who unlike the Left SRs did not join the Soviet government at any point and unlike the rightist SRs did not attempt to set up rival governments, but instead attempted to perform as an opposition party. They continued to speak for the workers' interests as they saw them while opposing the Whites and criticizing the Bolsheviks. They did have some successes in elections to factory committees and soviets in 1918 and 1919. Here, the party's Central Committee offered an alternative program for the recovery of Russia. The economic program is remarkably similar to what Lenin would offer with the New Economic Policy in 1921. The political program, while calling for important democratization and the end of terror agencies such as the Cheka, accepts some restrictive measures—limitations on who can utilize the press, for example.*

TO ALL WORKING MEN AND WOMEN:  
WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

What must we do, comrades, in order to save the Russian Revolution, beset as we are by external enemies—Kolchak, Denikin, Iudenich and the Allied imperialists—and by dangers and calamities in our midst: lack of food and fuel, shortage of goods, the appalling rise of all prices, the despair and apathy of the working masses, the embitterment of the peasantry and destitute city-dwellers? That is the question which torments all politically conscious workers, who see how every day saps the internal strength of the Revolution, while the desperate masses express their discontent in strikes and riots which make the situation still worse.

The Central Committee of the RSDWP appeals to responsible workers of every political shade—Social Democrats and Communists, Right and Left SRs and non-party workers—to give their attention to a programme which, in the Committee's opinion, offers the only way out of the present grave situation and the impasse into which the Revolution has fallen.

All responsible workers must aim to defend the Revolution and ensure its normal, healthy development so that, uniting in a mighty surge with the revolutionary proletariat of the West, it may extend the principles of socialism ever more widely throughout political life. For this purpose we must maintain, strengthen and establish on rock-like foundations the political power of the working classes of our country, and we must lay the basis for the restoration of our economy, which has been crippled by four years of foreign war and two of civil war.

How are we to achieve these aims?

First and foremost, of course, is the task of winning the war. To defend the workers' power and the conquests of the Revolution against its enemies, to provide the country with food and raw materials, to induce the Allies to raise the blockade which is strangling our economy—to do all this we must strain every effort to defeat the counter-revolutionary hordes who are attacking Soviet Russia and to show the governments and peoples of Europe that our Revolution cannot be conquered on the field of battle.

But the war is closely connected with economic and political problems. It is not enough to defeat a Kolchak or a Denikin and drive their forces away from Moscow, Kharkov or Petersburg: we must see to it that, once defeated, they cannot renew their attack in three months' time. They must not be allowed to find masses of peasants, workers and Cossacks ready to fight under the banner of counter-revolution, or to overrun huge areas with small bodies of troops because the revolutionary power is hamstringed by the peasants' and workers' apathy, embitterment, exhaustion or disappointment and cannot mobilize sufficient forces

to win a rapid, decisive victory. We must, in short, put an end to the kind of situation that has already occurred in the Ukraine and Belorussia, on the Don and the Volga, in the Urals and in Siberia: the masses at first welcomed the revolutionary power that saved them from the landlords and White Guards, but after two months they longed for the latter to come back and rescue them from the hardships of the revolutionary order and from acts of violence and lawlessness that discredit our cause.

If we are to succeed in fighting off the counter-revolutionaries we must also put a stop to the economic chaos and growing impoverishment of the workers which makes it impossible to supply and transport our armies or to enlist active and ready support from the workers and peasants. We must have better methods of production and exchange than Soviet Russia has so far known, and make better use than hitherto of social forces that can help to restore the economy. We must, in short, radically alter our economic policy, and cease acting in a partial or haphazard way, jumping this way and that in order to plug the latest hole in our defences: we must work to a definite plan and with a single aim, allowing the state to do all that it can with the resources at its disposal, but letting private persons, organizations and groups carry out any tasks that they are better fitted to perform rapidly and reliably than the state.

At the same time, if we are to solve the military problem and meet our urgent economic requirements, we must correctly understand and solve the political problem as well. Under the present system a single party, representing a small fraction of the population, enjoys exclusive power, governing without any control on the part of the masses who are deprived of rights, and resorting freely to terror. A system of this kind is clearly incapable of solving the problems of military defence or coping with economic chaos. It involves the squandering of untold millions of public money which might be used to improve the workers' lot; in the provinces, it confers authority and privileges on careerists and small groups of workers and peasants who look down on their fellows as subjects without rights; everywhere government officers and institutions are manned by an incompetent bureaucracy which values people not for their abilities but for their submissiveness to authority.

The system enables bureaucrats and privileged Communist cells to hamper and thwart any measure they do not like, however useful and necessary it may be. Organs of the police and Cheka have undisputed control over the fate of every working man and peasant, just as they have over the intelligentsia and the bourgeoisie. The peasants and working masses lose all interest in politics and public affairs, which are settled in prolonged sessions of small groups, impenetrable to outsiders. At a time of acute peril, when the Revolution can only be saved by a spiritual upsurge and by the creative independence and revolutionary activity of the masses, responsible members of the proletariat find with horror that the ordinary working man or peasant is sunk in lethargy, passively waiting for the crisis to resolve itself and bovinely muttering 'It's no concern of mine,' however desperately one seeks to arouse him to ward off counter-revolution and improve production and labour discipline. The workers and peasants behave like this because they have been forcibly discouraged from taking any free, independent part in political life. They no longer feel that they are the masters of the state and that the government and its officials are their clerks and servants; on the contrary, they have been taught that the power which governs in their name is in fact independent of the great bulk of the people.

Not only, therefore, must we pursue the war energetically and introduce radical economic reforms, but we must transform the political system no less radically.

For these reasons the Central Committee of the RSDWP suggests to all politically conscious workers the following list of measures which, it believes, could arrest economic collapse and the deterioration in working-class conditions, reunite the workers with the peasants, inspire them and the democratic masses with renewed faith in the Revolution, enable them to organize fruitfully, increase revolutionary Russia's warlike capacity and bring about a speedy victory over the counter-revolution and an end to the Civil War.

## ECONOMIC MEASURES

1. The peasants should retain, on a collective or individual basis as they may freely decide, the public and privately owned lands which they seized and parcelled out at the time of the Revolution. Other lands, not as yet distributed, should be leased on a long-term basis to needy peasants and peasant associations, except for those lands on which large-scale model husbandry is being, and can continue to be, carried out by the state or by leaseholders. The decrees abolishing the Committees of the Poor should be put into effect without exception. Agricultural communes should not be established by force, either directly or indirectly. Government-held supplies, agricultural implements and seed should be equitably distributed not only among communes but to all peasants who need them on communes and soviet lands.

2. The present food supply system should be replaced by one on the following basis:

a. The state should purchase grain at agreed prices involving a large application of the barter principle; it should then be sold at low prices to the poorest dwellers in town and country, with the state making up the difference. The state should make purchases through its agents, cooperatives or private traders on a commission basis.

b. The state should purchase, at a price equal to the cost of production, a certain proportion of the grain surpluses held by the better-off peasants in the more fertile provinces, the proportion being decided with the advice of freely elected representatives of the local peasantry.

c. Grain should be purchased by cooperatives and workers' organizations, who should at the same time make over the stocks they have procured to government organs concerned with food supply. The state retains the right to requisition supplies from large landowners who are deliberately hoarding them for speculative purposes. Transport arrangements are under the primary control of the state, cooperatives and workers' organizations. All anti-profititeer detachments should be disbanded. The transfer of foodstuffs from a particular locality shall not be prohibited save in exceptional circumstances and by a decision of the central legislature.

The state shall assist, materially and by administrative measures, the transfer of workers and their families from places where food is scarcest and their resettlement in fertile areas.

3. The state should retain control of major industrial enterprises that are fundamental to economic life, such as mines, metallurgical plant, the chief branches of the metal-working industry, etc. However, in all places where this seems likely to improve or animate production or to extend its range, recourse may be had to organizing such enterprises by a combination of state and private capital, by the compulsory formation of a trust under state control or, in exceptional cases, by means of a concession. All other large industrial enterprises, except where state control is desirable for fiscal or other reasons and would not be deleterious to production, should as a rule be gradually transferred into private hands, by leasing to a cooperative or a new entrepreneur, or to the former owner on condition that he accepts the obligation to restore and organize production. The state shall regulate the distribution of fuel and raw materials to different branches of production, enterprises and areas.

4. Small-scale industry should in no case be nationalized.

5. The state shall regulate the distribution to different areas, in accordance with a fixed plan, of the chief articles of mass consumption such as textiles, farm implements, salt, lighting materials, etc., with the aid of cooperatives and private traders.

6. As regards trade in other articles of the first necessity and also in luxuries, the state should refrain from imposing restrictions and should allow cooperatives and private enterprise to function freely, except in cases where regulation or even monopoly is desirable on account of the extreme scarcity of the product, e.g. medical supplies.

7. The credit system should be so reorganized as to facilitate in every way the use in trade and industry of available funds accumulated by producers in town and country and to afford scope for private initiative in trade, industry and agriculture.

8. The repression of speculation and trading abuses should be left to the courts and governed by specific legal provisions. All arbitrary acts of requisition, confiscation and the detention of goods should be punished. The law should protect rights of ownership in the case of all industrial and commercial concerns that are released from nationalization. In the future, when expropriation is required by the public interest it should take place on the basis of a decision by the supreme legislative bodies and on conditions determined by them.

9. Workers' unions, in addition to taking a direct part in the work of regulatory bodies, are also and primarily representatives of the interests of the proletariat vis-a-vis the state and private entrepreneurs. In this latter capacity they should be wholly independent of any state bodies.

10. Wage rates in state enterprises should be raised and minimum rates fixed for private enterprises in accordance with the commercial price-level for necessary goods....

11. The decree on consumers' communes should be revoked. Workers' and general cooperatives should be preserved as autonomous organizations, without the imposition of appointees or other interference in their internal affairs. They should also have the right to carry on non-commercial activity such as publishing, education, etc.

#### POLITICAL MEASURES

1. The right of voting for members of soviets should be extended to all workers of both sexes. Town and village soviets should be elected freely by all workers, with a secret ballot and freedom of canvassing by word of mouth and by the press. Soviets and Executive Committees should be subject to re-election at fixed intervals. Soviets shall not be entitled to exclude individual members or groups from their midst on political grounds. All officials and public bodies shall be subordinate to local soviets and Central Executive Committees.

2. The Central Executive Committee of Soviets should once more function as the supreme legislative and administrative body, its proceedings being open to public observation. No law shall come into force without being discussed and approved by the CEC.

3. Freedom of the press, of assembly and of association should be restored, and any party representing the workers shall have the right and be allowed to use premises for meeting, paper supplies, printing works, etc. Any restriction of this right that may be necessitated by the war against counter-revolution shall be established and clearly defined by the legislature; it shall not infringe the basic liberty and shall be applied only by the courts and institutions under their direct control.

4. The Revolutionary Tribunals should be reorganized in such a way that the judges are elected by all the workers. Together with their subordinate investigatory commissions they should have sole responsibility for combating counter-revolution. All officials should be directly liable to prosecution before these Tribunals for illegal acts committed in the execution of their duties, at the suit of the injured party in each case. Terror shall be done away with as an instrument of government; the death penalty be abolished, and likewise all investigatory and punitive organs independent of the courts, such as the Extraordinary Commission (Cheka).

5. Party institutions and cells should be deprived of state authority, and party members of all material privileges.

6. The bureaucratic apparatus should be simplified by the extension of local self-government.

7. A policy of understanding should be pursued vis-a-vis the nationalities which have for any reason broken away from Russia, in order to put a speedy end to the Civil War and restore the unity of the state on a basis of national self-determination. The Cossack districts—Don, Kuban, Tessa, the Urals, Astrakhan, Orenburg, etc.—should be allowed the widest possible autonomy and there should be no interference in their internal affairs or system of land tenure. Siberia should have regional self-government, and the independence of Finland and Poland should be recognized.

## AN APPEAL AGAINST POGROMS

Summer, 1919

*Violence against the civilian population, both deliberate and accidental, was a part of the Civil War. Jews, who long had suffered from official and popular discrimination and from being used as scapegoats, were often singled out during this period. Anti-Bolshevik forces especially attacked Jews, often associating them with the Bolsheviks (several of whose prominent leaders were Jewish). The Bolsheviks, and other socialist parties, usually attempted to defuse anti-semitic feelings and to prevent pogroms, even though their own soldiers sometimes joined them, as this document implies. This appeal was put out by the Odessa Bolsheviks, probably sometime in mid-1919.*

## UKRAINIAN SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC

Proletarians of All Countries, Unite!

DOWN WITH THE POGROM-MAKERS!

Comrades! The czarist government, which protected the interests of the capitalists and landed proprietors, always resorted to Jew-baiting for the purpose of strengthening its power.

THE CZARIST GOVERNMENT ORGANIZED HUNDREDS OF JEWISH POGROMS; IT SPENT MILLIONS OF THE PEOPLE'S MONEY FOR THE PURPOSE OF AROUSING NATIONAL ANIMOSITY.

Through the oppression of nationalities it endeavored to divide the toiling masses of different nationalities, and hindered the workers of different nationalities from joining hands for a united struggle against their common enemy: the autocracy, the landed proprietors and the capitalists.

And now Grigoriev's rascals incite their robber bands against the defenseless Jews, vent on them all their anger, and torture women, old men and children.

Comrades! Those who direct and inspire these bands and gangs, Grigoriev and his like, are the same protectors of the interests of the capitalists and landed proprietors. THEY HAVE THE SAME TRAITOROUS AIM: TO DIVIDE THE WORKING CLASS AND TO BREAK THE UNITED PROLETARIAN FRONT.

THE BLACK HUNDRED AND THE GRIGORIEVISTS, IN UNION WITH THE WORLD BOURGEOISIE, ARE TRYING TO DROWN THE COMMUNIST REVOLUTION IN THE BLOOD OF INNOCENT VICTIMS, IN THE BLOOD OF POVERTY-STRICKEN JEWS. JEWISH POGROMS ARE THE STRAW AT WHICH THE OUTWORN WORLD IS CLUTCHING IN ORDER TO SAVE ITS CAPITAL.

Comrades, Red Guardists, Workers and Peasants! Do not be misled by the scoundrels and provocateurs who sold themselves to the bourgeoisie and nobility and who urge you to make pogroms. Over the corpses of the Jewish poor the capitalists and landed proprietors are trying to find a way to the millions and the houses which they lost.

Together with the torrents of blood of the Jewish poor will swim away the LANDS from the peasants and THE FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS from the workers, will swim away the freedom and the power from the toilers, which have been won at such cost.

Comrades, Red Guardists, be firm, do not yield to provocation. Let your answer to the Black Hundred agitation be the brave and proud call:

DOWN WITH THE POGROM-MAKERS!

Hold firmly in your hands the red banner—the banner of struggle and freedom.

LONG LIVE THE INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' ARMY.

LONG LIVE THE UKRAINIAN SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC.

LONG LIVE THE POWER OF THE WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES AND OF ALL NATIONS.

Odessa Committee of the Communist (Bolshevik)  
Party of Ukraine

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*Soviet Russia*, Vol. 1, No. 12 (August 23, 1919), p. 15.



## THE ACTIVITY OF THE COMMISSARIAT FOR SOCIAL WELFARE

August 16, 1919

*The new regime was committed to a wide range of social welfare policies, although they proved difficult to implement in the financial straits in which the new regime found itself. Some of the leaders, including especially Alexandra Kollontai, the Commissar for Social Welfare, felt that implementing these social policies were among the most important tasks facing the new government. Although best known for her writings and activism on behalf of women's rights and a new type of family relationship (see above, November 16, 1918), Kollontai was interested in broader social issues. Here she describes—in terms that somewhat blur the distinction between what was being attempted and what was actually being done—the activities and objectives of the Commissariat. This article, in an officially sponsored Soviet weekly in America, provides a good description of the types of social reforms many Bolsheviks hoped to bring about in Russia.*

Alexandra Kolontai

### *The Activity of the Russian People's Commissariat for Social Welfare*

The People's Commissariat for Social Welfare, which arose from the will of the workers' and peasants' revolution, represents an entirely new departure for Russia. There is nothing in the past that is equivalent to it. Under the old regime, the needy population depended entirely on the scant alms of charity organizations. The latter represented merely the caprice of people who did not know how to kill time; the practical results of their work was therefore equivalent to zero. The November revolution has done away with this penny charity, and has put in its place the duty of the state toward all working citizens. The many-sided activity of the Commissariat for Social Welfare, and the tasks which it must meet, found their expression in the "Provisions for Social Welfare for Workers," confirmed October 31, 1918, by the Council of People's Commissars. In accordance with these provisions, welfare work applies without exception to all workers who obtain their livelihood by their own work, without exploitation of other people's work, and when we recall that with the introduction of obligatory labor duty, and with the nationalization of capitalistic enterprises, the bourgeoisie must disappear in Soviet Russia, it is clear that in the near future the social welfare work must include all classes of the population of the Russian Federative Soviet Republic.

Welfare activity is applicable, according to the new decree, to all cases that have lost all means of subsistence, either through temporary incapacity for work, through general debility, mutilation, pregnancy, etc., or through permanent incapacity for work. According to the law, one has a right to welfare attention, even in cases of loss of the means of subsistence through unemployment, where such is not the fault of the unemployed. It is far from the intentions of the organs of social welfare to take steps to prevent sickness and mutilation, but it is their intention to provide, for the whole population, every possible kind of medical aid, beginning with first aid in cases of sudden illness, up to every possible medical treatment of a special nature, such as that provided in ambulatories, sanatoriums, etc. In addition, every worker



has a claim to medicaments and to special medical instruments, artificial limbs, etc. In cases of temporary loss of the ability to work, through disease or mutilation, compensations amounting to the sum earned by the unemployed are granted up to the time of complete restoration of health. Pregnant and confined women receive aids of like amount for a period of eight weeks preceding and eight weeks following confinement, if they are physical workers. Other cases receive such aid for six weeks. In cases of unemployment, the aid is granted up to the day of re-employment, at the rate of the smallest compensation in the locality in question that is permitted by its tariff. In cases of permanent lack of employment, or unemployment for more than sixty percent of the working time, a full allowance is paid; in other words, for one month, twenty-five times the average daily wage of the locality in which the unemployed man lives; where unemployment amounts to 45-60% of working time, three-quarters of this allowance is paid; for 30-45% one-half; for 15-30%, one-fifth of the full allowance.

According to its functions, the Commissariat for Social Welfare is divided into the following sections:

I. Section for Children's Homes. Among the duties of this section are the care for children without guardians, such as the exposed child (foundling), orphans, illegitimates, children of beggar women and prostitutes, children who have been taken away from their parents by law (criminals, drunkards, street vendors, etc.), as well as abnormal children of three classes: (1) morally abnormal, who have committed a crime, and to whom the law of January 17, 1918, is applicable (according to this law, courts are abolished for minors and they are assigned to the care of the People's Commissariat for Social Welfare); (2) Mentally abnormal children; (3) Physically abnormal children. The Section for Children's Homes establishes asylums, communes and homes for children in order in this way to replace their families. In these asylums and homes, the principle of labor and the principle of children's independence are carried out. The children's homes are connected with libraries, clubs, playgrounds, workshops, etc. After attaining a certain age, the children of these asylums and homes, as well as all other children, must attend the schools which are open to all. In the children's homes and asylums the children remain until the age of seventeen, whereupon they enter life for themselves, without relieving the state however, of the continuance of its care, in accordance with the "provisions." According to the reports, up to January 1, 1919, more than 100,000 children are under such supervision in Russia, and there are 1,500 children's homes. In the near future, a further considerable number of homes and asylums are to be opened.

II. Section for Care of Mothers and Infants. This Section has established, in large numbers, asylums and homes for the pregnant. For women in confinement, lying-in establishments have been organized, in which the mothers obtain instruction in the nourishment and care of children. After leaving such establishments, the mother, together with the new-born child, is placed in a new home which is under supervision of special physicians. In the factories and works, as well as in the country, at the time of work in the fields in summer, day nurseries are established, in which mothers can feed their own children; orphaned infants are taken care of in special institutions under medical supervision in which the children are fed. The Section for the Care of Mothers and Infants has its own dairies, in which milk is provided for the mothers and children. In addition, they supervise the milk trade, in so far as the latter is intended for children. The Section has also established courses for the instruction of those supervising these homes, in which the students receive, in addition to general instruction, also certain specific instruction.

III. Section for the War-Maimed. The chief task of this Section is to make the maimed capable of performing such variety of work as is compatible with their individual mutilations.

With this in view, the Section aims particularly to secure the greatest possible restoration of normal health in the individual in order to prepare him for work that will be in accordance with the character of his mutilation. For cripples, there is a great number of the most varied workshops in which they may apply their forces and their energy. In Moscow, there are ten vocational courses for cripples.

IV. Section for Invalids. According to data thus far received, which are as yet by no means complete, this Section is at present taking care of about 65,000 old men and women, who are living in 2,000 homes. In the near future, a thorough transformation of the homes intended for invalids is proposed; they are to be based on a model unit for 50 and 100 inmates, instead of the numbers hitherto sheltered. In these homes, the principle of labor and the principle of independence are carried out as far as possible.

V. Outside Aid. Permanent financial aid is at present granted not only to the unemployed, but also to the families of Red Army men. At a very early date, a decree will probably be issued as to the care of families of physicians and victims of the counter-revolution. The maximum annual allowance of this kind is 2,000 rubles per person. In the decree of the Council of People's Commissars on Social Welfare, the payment of allowances to all men over fifty, all women over fifty-five is provided; yet the serious financial situation, together with the continued war needs, which are at present forced upon Russia, make it impossible to carry out this decree with absolute completeness; for this reason, the invalids, as has been already mentioned, obtain aid in the form of actual necessities, at the various homes.

VI. Temporary Aid. As a matter of principle, aid is granted to the needy soldiers of the old army, namely to 400,000 men (according to the financial report more than 1,000,000,000 rubles have been paid out this way). In addition, the Section has established workshops of all kinds, in order to secure work for the needy population. For the same purpose, government constructions are being undertaken, cheap and even free eating houses established, dwelling places and night lodgings opened. A great amount of work arises for this Section from the fact that it provides aid for fugitives from the localities that have been taken by the White Guardists.

VII. Section for Aid to the victims of the counter-revolution. This Section provides aid for the workers in the Soviet and the Party, who have suffered under the counter-revolution, also to political fugitives who are returning with the Red Army. For the purpose of aiding fugitives and victims of the counter-revolution, all sorts of agricultural communes are established, while persons of this kind may obtain, previous to their assignment to such communes, a financial aid equivalent to the minimum necessary for maintaining life.

VIII. The Section for Rations provides for the rationing of the soldiers of the old army and the families of the Red Guardists.

In addition to the above cited chief Sections, there are also less important sub-divisions, such as that for the combatting of mendicancy and of street vending.

In the second half-year of 1918, the People's Commissariat for Social Welfare spent 600,000,000 rubles, while the proposed budget for the first half-year of 1919 was for more than 2,000,000,000 rubles. The funds of the People's Commissariat for Social Welfare consist of payments of the following classes: For aids paid to mothers and the unemployed, in the form of a uniform impost for the entire territory of Soviet Russia; for the remaining varieties of welfare work, the amount to be paid in is fixed by the local organs of the People's Commissariat, on the basis of tariffs depending on the danger-class to which each occupation is assigned by the local authorities. All these funds together constitute a single, All-Russian Fund for Social Welfare.

*Soviet Russia*, Vol. 1, No. 11 (August 16, 1919), pp. 1-3.

## LORD CURZON ON THE ALLIED INTERVENTION IN RUSSIA

August 21, 1919

*Allied intervention was an erratic undertaking, with the objectives often confused and in any case varying among Allied powers and changing over time. It was compounded by the complexity of the situation in Russia and the difficulty of obtaining reliable information. Believing that a coordinated Allied policy was essential, the British Foreign Minister, Lord Curzon, wrote this memorandum (approved by the British Cabinet) for Prime Minister Balfour in Paris. It presents a pessimistic evaluation of the achievements of intervention, an overview of the history and reasons for intervention, and a wide ranging review of the situation in Russia in the late summer of 1919. It also reflects the growing disenchantment with intervention which soon afterward led to withdrawal.*

Sir,

The situation in the different parts of the former Russian Empire is so disquieting, and the need for a co-ordinated policy among the Allied Powers is so urgent, that His Majesty's Government feel compelled to address an expression of their views to those Allied and Associated Powers with whom they are acting, and to invite a reconsideration by them of the problem in the form which it has now assumed.

Allied military intervention in Russia was originally undertaken exclusively as a war measure. In whatever region it was attempted, it was designed to prevent the German armies from overrunning the country and acquiring materials and supplies of which they had been deprived elsewhere. Gradually, however, the area of these operations extended; the necessity of supporting those Russian troops or communities which were engaged in fighting the common enemy, and struggling to maintain the independence of Russia, increased as time went on; upon the borders of the old Russian Empire States of non-Russian nationality broke away from the disrupted Empire, and commenced a struggle sometimes for their own independence, sometimes against the Germans, by whom their existence was threatened, sometimes against the Russian Soviet Government, which endeavoured to strangle their newfound liberty, and the methods and procedure of which they regarded with the utmost horror.

Little by little, therefore, the intervention of the Allies has assumed a wider aspect. In some cases, as in the north of Russia, Allied armies have found themselves vigorously fighting against Bolshevik troops. Elsewhere, without actually engaging in the struggle, immense contributions of military arms, munitions, and stores have been made to the cause of those who were fighting for a reconstituted Russia, freed alike from German pressure from without and Bolshevik misgovernment within. Immense sums of money have been expended; a relative degree of success has in some cases been obtained; but the general impression left, after more than a year of these endeavours, is one of disappointment, in some cases of admitted failure.

It cannot be said that an altogether consistent policy has been pursued. Even now, the principles upon which that policy rests in the last resort are in some respects in dispute. Action is taken sometimes by the representatives of the Allied and Associated Governments sitting in Paris or by the institutions which they have set up, sometimes by the Governments themselves. The situation is so complex, and the difficulties of arriving at a decision which is acceptable to all are so great that, in some instances, it would be no exaggeration to admit that there is no policy at all.

In these circumstances, the Great Powers where they act—and too often it must be confessed that refuge is taken in inaction—adopt an uncertain line of conduct; the financial burden tends to fall almost exclusively on the shoulders of those who either have the greatest capacity or the least unwillingness to pay; the independent States or groups or communities, with the fortunes of which we have associated ourselves, do not always make the best

use of the help which they get, and are constantly clamouring for more; it remains a matter of almost weekly disputation whether recognition shall or shall not be extended to this or that community; Allied Missions despatched in every direction endeavour to produce something like order out of the prevailing chaos; advice is accepted where it is supplemented by substantial material assistance, elsewhere it is apt to be ignored.

Meanwhile, with some notable exceptions, the Russian forces whose cause we have espoused seem to be fighting with imperfect vigour and no small lack of success. In some cases the Governments by whom they are directed are suspected of reactionary opinions and desires. It seems uncertain whether they can appeal to the populations of the districts where they are fighting by the offer of a protection more secure, or an administration less unpopular, than that of the Soviet forces against which they are contending. Simultaneously the Bolshevik armies appear to be gaining in military spirit and efficiency. The Soviet Government, though its administration is stained by acts of the vilest cruelty and by the most abominable crimes, and though it is constantly alleged upon trustworthy evidence to be on the verge of collapse, is apparently stronger than it was six months ago.

The general conclusion is suggested, therefore, that the results produced by Allied intervention have so far become incommensurate either with the objects for which they were undertaken or with the enormous expenditure involved.

Such would appear to be a fair—though it cannot be described as a roseate—view of the situation. It may be desirable to review this in somewhat greater detail before proceeding to the recommendations with which this despatch will close.

In August 1918 a combined military occupation, first of Murmansk and then of Archangel, was undertaken by the Powers with the objects of closing these ports against Germany, of preventing the establishment by the Germans of a submarine base in the Arctic, and of keeping a door open for the Allies to Northern Russia. For a time these operations were entirely successful, and they enabled a local Government, entitled the Northern Provisional Government, to establish itself in position of some security in Archangel. Even at that date it was not contemplated that the Allied occupation should be other than temporary, but it was hoped to give sufficient encouragement and stability to the forces with whom we were acting to enable them to stand after the Allied contingents had withdrawn. Furthermore, as time went on, and as the star of Admiral Koltchak appeared to be in the ascendant, and his forces were steadily pushing their way towards the west, it was hoped to establish contact between his armies, operating from Siberia, and those of the Northern Provisional Government. Accordingly, within the last few months, His Majesty's Government despatched a fresh relief force to Archangel, with the view of facilitating an advance by the forces of the Archangel Government to Kotlas and Viatka, where it was hoped that a junction with the Siberian forces would be made. This operation has had to be abandoned, in consequence of the series of disastrous reverses sustained by Admiral Koltchak; and was now more than doubtful whether, when Archangel and Murmansk have been evacuated by the Allied forces, the Northern Provisional Government will continue to exist. Meanwhile, the arrangements for the promised evacuation, which for many reasons it is impossible to postpone beyond the forthcoming autumn, are far advanced. Steps are being taken to withdraw those classes of the native population which will be placed in serious danger by our withdrawal, and it appears certain that, before the winter has closed in, the military front that has been maintained in this region against the Soviet forces will for the most part, if not entirely, have vanished.

In Siberia the situation has undergone a decided change for the worse. Some months ago the prospects of Admiral Koltchak appeared to be promising. The recognition of his Government had long been pressed for by the Allied representatives at Omsk as a solution of many of his difficulties and as calculated to consolidate his power. It was not, however, till June of this year that an exchange of notes took place between the Allied Powers and

Admiral Koltchak, and even then all that the latter [sic] undertook was the continuance of support to him on certain conditions. This action on the part of the Powers was, at first, generally interpreted in Siberia as a formal recognition of the Omsk Government, and its immediate result was to increase the prestige of Admiral Koltchak and to produce a very considerable rise in the value of the rouble. But when it was realised that the step taken by the Powers did not involve recognition, but merely "continuance of support," the reaction was correspondingly marked. Admiral Koltchak has lately suffered a series of continuous reverses, and his forces are still reported to be in full retreat.

The situation has not been eased by the action of the Omsk Government in the administration of its internal affairs, and there is evidence that the dissatisfaction which has been created will assume dangerous proportions unless the Allied Governments can assist in stabilising the position, and can exercise the necessary pressure on Admiral Koltchak to conform his policy to principles acceptable not only to the Allied Governments, but also to public opinion among the populations whom he rules or aspires to rule.

In South Russia the position is much more favourable. Though driven back in the spring of this year by the Soviet armies, General Denikin has recently succeeded in inflicting numerous severe reverses on the forces opposed to him, and has a deep advance into Russia. According to the reports which have been received, this advance has been welcomed by the population in the occupied territory, and there seems to be good ground for the belief that, provided General Denikin can be assured of the necessary material assistance, and will keep in view the central object of his endeavour, which is on the one hand to effect a junction with the forces of Admiral Koltchak on the Siberian side, and on the other to drive the Bolshevik armies back upon Moscow, he may attain a success which has been denied to his chief.

Up to the spring of the present year Allied troops were in occupation of Odessa, and of considerable tracts of territory surrounding that port. Their unfortunate withdrawal, however, in April enabled the Soviet Government to establish themselves both at Odessa and in the Crimea, and to constitute a threat to General Denikin's flank in the Donetz basin. It is as yet too early to predict with any confidence whether this misfortune can be retrieved.

The situation in the Ukraine is at present obscure. It is certain, however, that the authority of the Russian Soviet Government is not generally recognised in these areas, where an independent Ukrainian Government, under the leadership of General Petlura claims to exercise jurisdiction. None of the Allied Governments has hitherto recognised General Petlura's authority, and there have been no dealings with his Government. His Majesty's Government have always regarded the Ukraine as an integral part of Russia, and they have felt very strongly that the utmost care should be taken to avoid any steps which might commit them to encouraging the separatist tendencies of certain sections of Ukrainian opinion. Economically, the Ukraine can never be separated from Russia, and this must always be a predominant factor in considering Russo-Ukrainian relations.

On the Western Russian front, Poland and the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia, and Esthonia are conducting military operations against the Russian Soviet Government. So far as the Baltic States are concerned, continuance of their resistance depends largely on the amount of material assistance which they may be able to obtain, as well as upon the attitude which the Allied Governments may decide to adopt in regard to their national aspirations. Politically, the present situation is in the highest degree unsatisfactory. His Majesty's Government have recognised the *de facto* authority of the Provisional Governments of Esthonia and Latvia established at Reval and Libau respectively, and the Allied representatives in Paris have, in the fifth condition attached to the recognition of Admiral Koltchak, laid down that 'if a solution of the relations between Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and the Caucasian and Transcaspian territories and Russia is not speedily reached by agreement, the settlement will be made in consultation and co-operation with the League of Nations, and

that until such settlement is made, the Government of Russia agrees to recognise these territories as autonomous and to confirm the relations which may exist between their *de facto* Governments and the Allied and Associated Governments.' Yet no further steps have been taken to endeavour to secure the co-operation of the Border States of Russia in the policy laid down by the Allied Powers, and no communications have been addressed to the representatives of these States in Paris, in spite of their repeated requests to be informed of the intentions of the Allied Governments. Grave dissatisfaction has consequently resulted in Latvia, Lithuania, and Esthonia. In the north of Esthonia a Russian corps, formed out of the relics of the old Russian Twelfth Army Corps, has been operating partly in conjunction with the Esthonian forces. This corps is badly in need of arms and material, but on the whole has succeeded in maintaining its position. The relations of the leaders of this corps with the Esthonians are not altogether satisfactory on account of the suspicions entertained by the Esthonians concerning the intentions of the Great Russians; but no breach has yet occurred, and the Esthonian forces have recently assisted the corps in meeting the attacks of the Russian Bolshevik forces on this front.

On the other hand, the hopes that were at one time so widely entertained of an advance upon Petrograd by the combined forces of Esthonians, Finns, and the Russian armies still operating in this neighbourhood have had to be abandoned. Furthermore, the Germans exhibit a calculated reluctance to withdraw from these parts of the Baltic States which they were rashly permitted to occupy with their forces; and the general situation on this front cannot be described as otherwise than disquieting.

In Finland the situation is complicated. While certain Finnish leaders were strongly in favour of co-operating in the advance of Petrograd with the forces under the command of General Judenitch, a considerable and influential section of Finnish opinion has throughout been opposed to this course, unless the approval and assistance of the Allied Governments could first be secured. Loans and war material on a considerable scale have been solicited by the Finnish Government for this purpose. His Majesty's Government have not hitherto seen their way to do more than approve the agreement concluded between General Mannerheim and General Judenitch for the projected advance on Petrograd, and they have refused to assume the additional responsibility demanded by the Finnish Government. With the fall of General Mannerheim the project has received its *coup de grace*.

The lack of a clear and decisive policy has not been less manifest in the dealings with the Border States on the Caucasian front. Since the retirement of the German and Turkish forces from those regions, various republics, with a greater or less degree of encouragement from the Allied Powers, have there maintained an independent or quasi-independent existence. Of these the most considerable and most promising has been the Republic of Georgia. The next in potential range and resources has been the Republic of Azerbaijan. Smaller groups have sustained a more precarious autonomous livelihood in Russian Armenia and in Daghestan; but of these it has been generally conceded that the former will in all probability be incorporated in a larger Armenia, should such be created, while the latter has already, to a large extent, been absorbed in the area controlled by General Denikin's troops.

Here, as elsewhere, the policy of the Allied Powers has hovered between recognition and polite indifference, and the efforts of the British representatives who have been in military occupation of this territory prior to a withdrawal, which is now on the eve of being carried out, have been mainly directed to the preservation of order, the avoidance of inter-statal or inter-racial conflicts, the prevention of collision between the forces of the republics and those of General Denikin, and the recognition by the latter of the incipient liberties of the various national groups.

Although these republics are in each case represented at Paris, and although it is understood that their future status is in the hands of the Peace Conference, no definitive decision appears to have been reached as to the form of recognition to which they are entitled,

or the degree of autonomy which they are to be permitted to enjoy. All is in flux and uncertainty, and with the withdrawal of the only Allied forces to the south of the Caucasus, serious disturbance, if not worse, may be expected to ensue. Indeed, as these words are being written, alarming rumours continue to be received as to the imminence of a general reign of bloodshed in the evacuated territories, with the probable extirpation by massacre of large numbers of the Armenian population in the former province of Russian Armenia, about and around Nakchivan.

It will be seen from this brief survey of the situation on the various Russian fronts that, with the sole exception of South Russia, where General Denikin is operating, the military situation is the reverse of satisfactory. The almost complete collapse of Admiral Koltchak's army and the withdrawal from Archangel will release large Bolshevik forces which the Soviet Government will be able to throw either south or west against the fronts on which most reliance had hitherto been placed. Whether these will be able to withstand the shock it is as yet too early to determine.

It would perhaps be an unjustifiable deduction from the untoward developments that I have described, to argue that they have been mainly due to lack either of political vision or harmony on the part of the Allied and Associated Powers. But it would not be unfair to attribute the set-back in part to the fact that single Powers have, to a considerable extent, dissipated on various theatres such resources as they have been in a position to give to the whole, instead of pursuing an organised policy whereby effort could be concentrated and a due co-ordination established between political, military, and financial measures.

In this respect His Majesty's Government feel it incumbent on them to submit a clear statement of the share—as it appears to them a wholly disproportionate share—of the Russian burden, which they have borne, more especially since the outbreak of the Bolshevik revolution in November 1917.

Their commitments in Russia date back, indeed, to a much earlier period, and it is public knowledge that the vast sums, which were contributed by His Majesty's Government in the form of loans to enable Russia to maintain her armies and prosecute campaigns against Germany in the early stages of the war, amounted to the prodigious figure of £565,000,000.

It is, however, to the contributions made by this country since November, 1917, that His Majesty's Government desire particularly to draw attention.

In North Russia they have maintained forces since August 1918 of approximately 14,000, recently increased to 18,000 men, at a cost up to the period of evacuation of £5,600,000; to which must be added the cost of the naval operations connected with this expedition, amounting to £7,800,000. They have further equipped the Russian troops in this area, fed the civilian population, subventioned the Provisional Government, and established a sound currency system, at a total additional cost of £15,000,000. While this expenditure may eventually, under various agreements that have been concluded, be partly recovered from the Allies, the initial cost has fallen almost entirely on the shoulders of His Majesty's Government.

In Siberia they have supplied equipment to the forces of Admiral Koltchak to the value of £14,600,000. They have also maintained two regiments in Western Siberia, and have assumed responsibility for expenditure on material for the Siberian railway to the amount of 4,000,000 dollars. They have during the last six months maintained a considerable staff for this purpose in Siberia at the cost of £9,000 a month.

In South Russia they have despatched material to General Denikin to the value of more than £26,000,000, and have maintained forces, in the Caucasus at a cost which will have amounted, when evacuation is completed, to over £4,000,000. They have further maintained naval forces in the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea at a cost in the same period of £4,000,000.

In the Baltic they have furnished arms and material to the forces of Esthonia, Latvia, and the Russian Northern Corps at a cost of £2,800,000, in addition to maintaining strong naval forces in the Baltic and the Gulf of Finland.

The above are the chief commitments which have been accepted by His Majesty's Government. The total cost of their intervention in Russia will, it is estimated, have exceeded £94,000,000 before the close of the present year.

As a result of all these efforts His Majesty's Government have practically exhausted their resources in respect of war material, at the very moment when increased demands are being made upon them in Siberia, South Russia, Poland, the Baltic States, and Finland.

They feel therefore that the moment has arrived when, not merely in their own interests, but in view of the larger general considerations that have been already urged, a revised and more concerted arrangement is required among the Allied and Associated Powers as to their future political, military, and financial responsibilities in Russia, if these are still to be maintained. Whether it is desirable to effect a new redistribution of the shares to be assumed by each Power; whether the financial and military burden should continue to be borne, and, if so, by whom, and in what proportions; whether the best plan will be to allot definite spheres of activity to particular Powers; or whether there should be a revision of policy over the entire field of action in every part of the former Russian Empire: these are questions which, it seems to His Majesty's Government, call for immediate examination, and without an early reply to which it can hardly be expected that better results can be obtained.

With this object in view, His Majesty's Government desire to propose to the representatives of the Allied and Associated Powers in Paris that an early Conference should take place there, at which each of the Powers should be represented by one of its foremost statesmen, with the aim of arriving at a decision on this important subject. His Majesty's Government would be prepared to place before such a Conference their idea of the general policy which it is desirable to pursue, and the part which they themselves are prepared to take in it. They confidently hope that the other Powers will enter the Conference, should this proposal be accepted, with similar plans. In any case, if this procedure be adopted, there will at least be some hope that the present impasse may be brought to an end, that a policy to which all would adhere may be thought out and accepted, and that the sacrifices, in some cases overwhelming in character, to which all have submitted in the cause of a free and recovered Russia will not have been made in vain.

I am, etc.,  
CURZON OF KEDLESTON

*Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939, First Series, Vol. 3, pp. 519-526.*



## THE RABFAKY, WORKERS' FACULTIES, AND HIGHER EDUCATION

September 11, 1919

*Opening higher education to everyone (see decree of August 2, 1918, above) as a means of "proletarianizing" the universities floundered on the poor preparation of the new applicants. To remedy this special "workers' faculties" (rabfaky) were created, usually attached to a university. These were to provide a course of study preparing workers to compete successfully in the universities alongside youth of intelligentsia background. This was deemed important both to provide educated cadres for the new order and to change the political and social outlook of the universities, both students and faculty. The debate over how best to promote working class participation in higher education lasted for years, but the commitment to that goal and the use of this kind of special preparatory school remained a feature of educational policies.*



## REGARDING ORGANIZATION OF WORKERS' FACULTIES AT UNIVERSITIES

For the purpose of making it possible for workers and peasants to actually and extensively exercise their right to matriculate in higher educational institutions, and taking into consideration that inadequate preparedness of the proletarian mass for study within the walls of higher schools, especially in subjects of exact knowledge (mathematics, physics, chemistry and others), serves as an obstacle to the use of this right, the board of the Department of Higher School Affairs resolves to open preparatory courses at universities of the Republic. These will be autonomous remedial training institutions whose purpose is to prepare workers and peasants in the shortest possible time for higher education; they will be titled "Workers Faculties."

1. Workers' faculties are under the immediate jurisdiction of the Department of Higher Schools.

2. Workers' faculties exercise all the rights of a faculty and have their own representation in all collectives and presidiums of a higher learning institution.

3. Workers' faculties have the right, under their own responsibility, to use all equipment, materials and other educational supplies for physics, chemistry and other classrooms, laboratories, and practicums of the higher learning institution.

4. A higher learning institution, in the distribution of space and the establishment of its own schedules, is obligated to satisfy workers' faculties' demands for classrooms, offices, laboratories, and practicums, giving them enough to insure the widest possible development of their activity and giving them full opportunity to organize centralized classes.

5. Workers' faculties operate according to programs and plans approved by the Scientific Section in agreement with the Professional Education Section.

Note. Workers' faculties exercise the right to create projects, programs and plans.

6. Teaching personnel are invited by the workers' faculty and are approved by the Scientific Section.

Note 1. Until approval the workers' faculty may permit temporary employment of teachers.

Note 2. The absence of a response from the Scientific Section within a month is equivalent to confirmation.

7. Workers' faculties are financed by the Department of Higher Schools according to a special estimate, worked out by workers' faculties.

8. Internal organizations of workers' faculties must provide for the broadest and most active participation by students in deciding all questions of both educational and economic administrative nature.

9. The faculty council is the leading organ which decides all questions concerning the workers' faculties. It elects a faculty secretary and, as an executive organ, a presidium consisting of a presiding chairman and two members—his assistants.

Note 1. The presidium is confirmed by the Department of Higher Schools. Lack of response within a month is equivalent to confirmation.

Note 2. Until confirmation, the presidium enters into temporary execution of its responsibilities.

10. The council of the workers' faculty consists of teachers conducting classes for the department and representatives from; 1) the students; 2) the council of the higher educational institution; 3) communist student faction of the institution; 4) local proletarian organizations; 5) the local Department of People's Education and 6) the support personnel of the faculty.

Note. The number of representatives from the students must be no less than the number of teachers entering the council of the workers' faculty from the collectives and organizations listed in items 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, by one representative.

11. Students of the workers' faculties enjoy all the rights of students of higher learning institutions and have social security.

12. Workers and peasants who can produce, either from a factory commission or a communist cell, certification that they are members of the peasant or working class, do not exploit another's labor, and that they stand on the platform of Soviet power, will be accepted as students.

13. All higher learning institutions have the obligation to open workers' faculties no later than November 1, for which they will organize, within two weeks after publication of this resolution, a temporary bureau of three people with temporary assignment to them of all the rights of a faculty council. This will consist of one representative from the department of higher schools or the local Department of Peoples' Education, and two representatives of the council of the higher learning institution, reorganized according to the July 7, 1919 enactment (1 chosen from professors and instructors, 1 from student representatives who belong to the learning institution council). (Collection of Laws, 1919, No. 35, st. 347). The higher learning institution must bring the opening of a faculty to the attention of the Department of Higher Schools.

14. Bureau members receive a salary set by the council of the higher learning institution and dependent upon local conditions. The pay for bureau members' work and all organization expenditures is provided by the higher learning institution, for which the latter requests a special advance.

15. Preparation courses for workers and peasants at higher education institutions, located at the First Moscow University, are recognized as workers' faculties operating on the basis of the current enactment.

Signed: Director of the Department of Higher Learning Institutions  
Mikh. Pokrovsky

*Sobranie uzakonenii i rasporiazhenii*, 1919, No. 45, st. 443, pp. 487-488.



#### NOTE TO LATVIA REGARDING PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

September 22, 1919

*By the fall of 1919 the Soviet government was ready to recognize independent, non-socialist, governments in Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Finland, all of whom had Allied and/or German support. At the same time as this note a similar one was sent to Lithuania and a somewhat more bellicose one to Finland; negotiations had already begun with Estonia. Peace treaties with all four were signed in 1920, confirming an independence they retained until the Second World War when all but Finland were annexed to the Soviet Union.*

A proposal to open peace negotiations has already been made by the Russian Soviet Government to the Reval Government [Estonia]. This proposal has been accepted by the Reval Government and peace negotiations are to begin in a few days. By this step the Russian Soviet Government has sufficiently demonstrated the absence of any aggressive intentions on its part towards the newly-established States on the borders of the former Russian Empire. Taking up the same position with regard to the Riga Government, the Russian Soviet Government proposes negotiations with the Riga Government for the cessation of hostilities and for working out conditions for peaceful relations between the two countries.

Degras, *Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy*, Vol. 1, p. 169.

## OFFICIAL SOVIET WIRELESS MESSAGES

October 1, 1919

*The Soviet government sent out a steady stream of messages about events in Russia. These present a remarkable picture of the variety of actions and activities taking place, and with that a sense of the jumble of news confronting people at any given time. Those given here were sent out on October 1 and assembled for printing in Soviet Russia, an official weekly of the Soviet government; similar compilations were given in subsequent issues of the weekly. For the introduction of "Communist Saturdays"—Subboniks—see June 28, 1919, above.*

*Military Bulletin of the Russian Soviet Republic for October 1, 1919*

WEST[ERN] FRONT. *Region of Dvinsk.* The enemy's attempts at attack were repulsed by our fire. *Regions of Borissov and Bobruisk.* The conflicts now in progress are favorable to the Red troops. SOUTH[ERN] FRONT. In all sectors we are repulsing enemy attacks, which are supported by armored trains and armored motor cars. *Region of UstKhoper.* Enemy attempts to cross the Don completely unsuccessful. TURKESTAN. *Region of Tsarev.* Incursions of enemy cavalry have been repulsed. *Region of Uralsk.* Powerful enemy attack southwest of Uralsk went to pieces against counter-attack of the Red troops. EASTERN FRONT. *Region of Tobolsk.* Red troops took possession of several hundred prisoners and of immense stores of materials. Along the Ishim railroad, we are continuing to roll back the enemy in spite of his savage resistance. To the north of the railroad line we have taken several localities.

*Communist Saturdays*

At Yarensk the Communist Party organized two Saturdays for work, and the Executive Committee of the district decided that the employees of the Soviet institutions of the city should take part in these Saturdays. At Pugachev, the fifth Communist Saturday had eight hundred participants. At Kostroma, the second Communist Saturday assembled two hundred and fifty workers, who gathered in more than four thousand poods of vegetables in the municipal truck gardens. Everywhere even persons without political affiliation are taking part in these Saturdays.

*More About the Communist Saturdays*

At Morshansk, the Communist Saturday has yielded splendid results. In the city, as well as in the whole district, hundreds of new members have been enrolled. It was decided to open the party meetings to all persons, even to those not Communists, if they were interested in politics, and these meetings are now attracting great numbers of persons without party affiliations, who tentatively follow the expositions of the Communist program and the speeches of the orators.

*Compulsory Education*

At Kostroma, the Proletkult has undertaken a comprehensive project for carrying out obligatory instruction. One of the schools in question has already been opened, in which the workers work for six hours a day, for their normal pay. The program includes not only reading and writing, but also the elements of geography, literature, anatomy, hygiene, singing, and politics. Simultaneously with the Proletkult, the Section for Public Instruction is opening a series of evening courses for adult workers.

*The Provinces and the Attempted Crime at Moscow*

The crime of the White Guards at Moscow first aroused the revolutionary sentiments of the masses. At Saratov, immense processions marched through the city, with banners flying, calling for the death of these enemies of the people. At Nevel, more than a thousand soldiers

and workers gathered at a meeting who unanimously passed a resolution calling upon all to engage in the implacable struggle, under the banner of Communism. The bomb that exploded at Moscow has unleashed our energies.

### *Meals and Hygiene*

On the demand of the Conference of Doctors, the Section for Meals, of the Moscow Consumers' League, proposes to open in all quarters restaurants that will enable the public to comply with the diet that may be medically prescribed. These restaurants are to be particularly installed for children.

### *Fine Arts*

The Fine Arts Section of the Commissariat for Public Instruction is opening courses at Moscow to prepare lectures on the history and practice of the Arts. The program includes: An Introduction to the Theory of the Arts, History of Esthetic Doctrines, Architectural Problems, Culture, Painting, Graphic Arts; the Study of the Various National Arts, such as, the Egyptian, Assyrian, Greek, etc., down to those of the present day.

### *The Political Movement in the Provinces*

In the entire Government of Nizhni-Novgorod, elections to the village and cantonal Soviets have taken place. All parasitic elements have been rigorously excluded from the Soviets. In the Soviets are included about equal numbers of middle peasants and poor peasants, including a considerable group of Communists and of enrolled sympathizers.

### *The Situation Under Petlura*

The Directorate is established at Vinnitsa. In this city, a regular fight took place between the mobilized soldiers and the former Petlurians. The chief kernel of the Petlurian troops consists of Galicians; the commanding officers are Russians, and the chief of staff is a German officer. It is admitted in this city that troops occupying a city or village are given the right to pillage for three days. Jewish prisoners are shot; others are flogged while naked, and imprisoned.

### *Denikin's True Countenance*

The invasion of Mamontov has been definitely liquidated. Nevertheless, certain details of his campaign offer an interesting view of the political ideas of his immediate superior, Denikin. In the region of Medovka a doctor was shot by the cossacks, because he was considered to be a Jew, in spite of the fact that he was not at all interested in politics. In the region of Orlovka, the physician of the insane asylum was shot because he was a Jew. As to the agrarian policy of Denikin, there is very interesting information in the instructive document enumerating the losses of the proprietor Chugayevski, of the Government of Voronezh. No sooner had his former possessions fallen into the hands of the Whites, than this landed proprietor hastened back to his lands and presented to the victor an account of the losses he had suffered under the Revolution. He includes in his total even the harvest of 1917, also trees cut down by the peasants, debts still due from them, harvests not turned in to the proprietor. In addition, he includes objects sold by him, since they constitute a loss when compared with the possible price he puts upon them if he had been able to sell them under favorable conditions. The total is thus brought up to 151,940 rubles, which this patriot asks his beloved country to return to him. At Yelets, the White Guards were not able to prevent themselves from symbolizing their political sympathy in their mad chase for the banknotes of the former empire. There is a regular speculation in progress with these banknotes. Finally, in one locality of the Ostrogorsk district, a document was found, asking the authorities of each canton to turn in one-third of all their harvests to the former proprietors, and only then to set aside the quantities for future seeding and for the inhabitants. Besides, there is hardly any need to prove a desire to restore the monarchy on the part of any army that has reintroduced as its national hymn the "God Save the Czar," and in which the orders are written on stationery with the letterhead of the Russian Monarchy League.

### *In the Country Districts*

At present an extremely interesting phenomenon is taking place in the Morshansk district. On the occasion of the last elections to the Soviets, the peasants, permitting themselves to be deceived, had allowed a number of profiteers and rural bourgeois to enter the Soviets. After six months of experience, the middle and poorer peasants found out who were their true friends. The Soviets of the wealthy used up the cantonal finances, allowed the mills to go to rack and ruin, and speculated with the products in the warehouses. At present, the peasants themselves have taken decisive measures against the exploiters and have decided to elect none but Communists to Soviet positions. The sympathy of the peasants is already indicated by their forwarding large quantities of excess harvest.

### *In Turkestan*

The Commissariat for Justice of the Soviet Republic of Turkestan, after the last session of the Soviet Congress, carried out a reform of the entire judicial system; as a consequence the Republic is now covered by a net-work of popular courts. The prisons have been changed into workhouses, in which trade schools have been opened.

### *Astronomical Lectures*

The Section for Public Instruction of the Moscow Soviet in October offers a series of free popular lectures on Astronomy in the Observatory of the Central Institute of Physics.

### *One of the Quarters of Moscow*

The Sokolniki Quarter has three clubs for adults and six for adolescents, in addition to a circle for the Young Lovers of Nature. The polytechnic courses opened last year now have about three hundred auditors. In the near future there will be inaugurated for adult workers four schools of the first class. Lecturers are sent to the various enterprises, and always have large audiences. Five libraries at various points in the quarter serve the populace. In the Rogozhski quarter, there were created in the course of the summer fifteen dining rooms for about three thousand children. One hundred excursions have been organized in the environs. Twenty of these were to the factories, and twenty-five were sight-seeing trips in Moscow. A new school of the second class has just been opened in this quarter.

### *Municipal Life*

The Moscow Soviet has just put in two machines of six hundred and seven hundred and fifty horse-power respectively, as an addition to the three that have hitherto served the drainage system. There have also been concluded a series of experiments for purifying and aerating the waters of the sewers.

### *Improvements in the Kremlin*

The Kremlin in Moscow is a veritable city, including an entire civil and military populace, occupying many buildings. After the month of February it was decided to make of these buildings model structures as to hygienic features, which might be initiated in the rest of the city. Disinfection chambers, booths, mechanical laundries, have been installed. A furnace has just been put in for the destruction of garbage, the caloric energy of which is to furnish hot water for the baths, the laundries, and the inhabitants of the Kremlin.

*Soviet Russia*, Vol. 2, No. 6 (February 7, 1920), pp. 135-136.

## A PARTY MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT DRIVE

October 1, 1919

*Purging the party of individuals who looked upon membership as a way of furthering their careers, and recruiting new ideologically committed members, has been a long-term issue for the Communist Party. Rapid growth since 1917 led to efforts to weed out undesirables in 1918 and again in 1919. By the fall of 1919 membership had dropped dramatically, at a time when the regime was hard pressed by the White offensives. Therefore, in a letter to party organizations, the Central Committee ordered a membership drive in which the usual screening procedures were waived. This kind of purge and recruit process was to become a recurring feature of the party.*

Comrades:

Now that in accordance with the resolutions of the Eighth Congress of our party the re-registration and weeding out has been almost accomplished in all the party organizations, the Central Committee considers it appropriate to undertake a campaign to recruit new members into the party.

At its session of September 26 the plenum of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party resolved to organize in the near future in cities, villages, and among the troops a "party week." The Central Committee does not fix the date of this week, leaving it to the party organizations to establish it locally, in accordance with local conditions, but the Central Committee insists that this work must be everywhere finished during the month of October.

The principal condition which the Central Committee considers essential is that during the "party week" members are to be received only from among working men and women, Red soldiers, and men and women of the peasantry. During this period admission to the party is closed to all others. We want to increase the numerical strength by an accession of working men and women of factories and shops, of peasants, men and women, from the villages.

The Eighth Congress of the Party in its resolution regarding organization justly pointed out that a quantitative improvement in the composition of the party must not be attempted at the expense of its qualitative strength. This decision of the party congress must be kept in view constantly during the campaign of the "party week."

In the course of the "party week" we must point out to all the new recruits to whom we appeal that we are calling them to a difficult, hard, but great struggle, against a long line of enemies. The recruits must be told that membership in the party involves tremendous duties, that the difficult times through which we are passing demand from members of the Russian Communist Party an iron discipline and self-sacrifice. Let only those enter our party who knowingly take upon themselves these difficult duties, who are ready to sacrifice everything to the work of the Russian Communist Party. At the same time we must open the door wide to workers, Red Army soldiers, and peasants who want to enter our party.

During the "party week" there must be organized everywhere tens and hundreds of large and small meetings; there must be spread tens and thousands of copies of our program. We must appeal first of all to those workers who consider themselves nonpartisans. In this work we must seek the fractions of trade unions and Soviets, the factory and shop committees, etc. During the "party week" entry into the party is not to be conditioned by the presentation of two written recommendations as heretofore.

All the formal requirements for workers, Red Army soldiers, and peasants are during this week suspended. In the shops, in the barracks, after laborers' meetings there is to be offered

a chance to those who wish to inscribe themselves as members of the party. The lists thus made up are later published for the general information at the given factory or at the barracks, and afterwards the lists are passed on by the old party nucleus of the given party or by the local party committee.

In accordance with local conditions comrades may find other forms of attracting better elements of the workers and peasant masses into the party. It is only necessary to get to work, to get rid of red tape, to attempt to dig out new strata and put to the work of recruiting some new members and without exception all the old party members.

Every worker who is a member of the party must attempt to recruit one or two new party members. Every Communist engaged in Soviets must find time during the "party week" to visit that factory or shop where he was employed before in order to enlist one or more new members in the party. If we make the proper effort, we shall thus double the strength of our party.

During the "party week" we ought to increase the membership of our party to half a million, and the results of the "party week" must be communicated immediately in detail by all provincial committees to the organization bureau of the central committee.

To work, comrades!

All honest and thinking workers ought to be in the ranks of our party.

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY.

From *Petrogradskaia Pravda*, October 1, 1919, reprinted in *Memorandum on the Bolshevik or Communist Party in Russia*, p. 31.



## RESULTS AND PROSPECTS OF SOVIET ECONOMIC POLICY

### A REPORT AFTER TWO YEARS

November 7, 1919

*The first two years of the Soviet state were difficult ones for the economy, not only because of the impact of war and civil war, but because of the policies—frequently changing—of the leaders themselves as they attempted to carry out a radical economic revolution. In an article published in Ekonomicheskaja zhizn' (Economic Life) on the second anniversary of the October Revolution, V.P. Miliutin, the deputy chairman of the Supreme Council of the National Economy, summarized the achievements of the past two years and looked ahead. Particularly noteworthy are the figures on nationalization of production, of which Miliutin was especially proud.*

V.P. Miliutin

#### *Results and Prospects of Our Economic Policy*

During the last two years our economic policy has been changing and developing as a result of the concrete conditions underlying the existence of Soviet Russia.

The first year was, in the main, a year of liquidation of the old capitalist relations. When the power passed into the hands of the proletariat, that class naturally had to take the economic administration into its own hands. During the first year the economic dictatorship of the proletariat transferred the means of production: the land, factories, mines, mills, and banks—into the hands of the organs of the Soviet Government. In the main the process of nationalization had been completed within the first year after the revolution. As many as 60

million desyatins of land have been taken over from the private landowners, 29 central banks have been nationalized, together with all their local branches; 16,000 merchant vessels have also been nationalized. In the course of the first year as many as a thousand of the largest industrial enterprises have been nationalized; the main branches of industry, such as coal mining, the electrotechnical industry, and a portion of the metallurgical and machine construction plants have been nationalized.

During the first year our economic policy has also been directed toward the building up of the machinery of economic management. We could not immediately assume the administrative functions. For this we had neither the personnel nor the means. It is true, however, that the enormous development of independent action among the working classes had already facilitated matters for us even during the first year. When the owners would leave their establishments, thus causing the disorganization of industry, the mill and factory committees and the trade unions would, usually, handle the situation to a considerable extent. Towards the end of the first year the administrative machinery had been built on absolutely new foundations, from top to bottom, with the closest participation of the laboring masses.

Thus, the economic policy of the Soviet Government, directed essentially toward the realization of fundamental Socialist principles, has been carried out.

Another basic feature of our economic policy during the first year after the revolution was the liquidation of the war and the transformation of our industry to a peace basis. We proposed to concentrate all our attention on serving the peacetime needs of the population. Every factory, every mill was arranging its program of production in such a manner as to bring about the transition from war-time production to the peace-time service of meeting the needs of the large masses of the population.

Thus, our economic policy during the first year consisted of an attack on the old capitalist organs and organizations, in the creation of a new Soviet apparatus, in taking over enterprises from private owners and placing them in the hands of the state under the regulation of economic activity.

The second year differs considerably from the first, both as regards the external conditions affecting Soviet Russia and as regards the internal problems which the Soviet Government faced—particularly those of the Supreme Council of National Economy. The second congress of the Council of National Economy, in its regulations and resolutions, had already determined the line which was to be followed in the domain of economic reconstruction. In the first place, Soviet Russia was compelled to come into collision with international capital.

The second year had therefore passed under the aegis of struggle against the aggressive international capital. We have been confronted with the live forces of capitalism, in the shape of the soldiers of the Entente powers—English, French, Italian—who have seized our most needed and most important positions, from an economic standpoint. The British took the Caucasus, and we were deprived of naphtha and petroleum. The aid of the Entente powers gave an impetus to the advance of the Russian counter-revolution from the south, from the north, from the west, and from the east. The counter-revolution, backed by cannon, shells, and money, has been advancing on Soviet Russia. At the same time the bourgeoisie has declared a blockade of Soviet Russia, in the hope of strangling her economically. All this has determined our economic policy.

We were immediately compelled to proclaim the transformation of the entire country into a single military camp. We had to place our entire economic activity on a war basis. Before everything else we had to place the defense of the achievements of the proletariat. It was in this direction that our economic policy was guided during the second year of the existence of the Soviet power.

But at the same time we had to make further internal reinforcements of our economic organization and our economic activity. From the regulation of our economic life we have passed over to direct management. During this second year we have completed the



nationalization of industry. At the present moment, as is well known, there are in all some 4,000 nationalized enterprises which represent practically 90 per cent of the country's total production. We have created up to 90 industrial state monopolies, centralizing the entire industrial management. The working class itself has furnished a quite considerable group of its own organizers and administrators.

At the same time our economic policy has been directed towards raising industrial productivity to its maximum capacity. Of course, the concrete conditions under which we had to live and work, were highly complex. It will be enough to point out that we had to get along during these two years on 10 per cent to 15 per cent of the quantity of fuel needed. Nevertheless, owing to the centralization of the entire economic management, we succeeded in solving the problems of a fair distribution of raw materials and fuel. Those fears which were entertained by many to the effect that the working class might disintegrate, proved to be groundless. The latest statistical data show that the number of workers, as compared with the pre-war period, has suffered the comparatively small reduction of approximately 20 per cent.

The reduction in the amount of productivity was mainly due to lack of fuel. The fuel crisis which we are now experiencing is caused mainly by the loss to Soviet Russia of such fuel resources as the Donetz basin, which usually yielded about a billion and a half (poods) of coal (anthracite), and the Caucasus, yielding a billion and a half (poods) of oil. The loss of these regions has dealt a colossal blow to our country.

Finally, outside of these basic problems of economic policy there was the most important one, during the second year, of keeping in touch with our villages. The creation of collective forms of rural economy, the organization of Soviet farms, of agricultural communes, of artels, and so on were the first considerations. As regards the middle class peasantry it was our aim to win over these many millions to the side of Socialism, aiding and supporting them with those economic resources and means which were needed by them. The question of connecting the city with the village, of connecting the industrial and rural economy has been continually very acute.

The question of spreading the influence of the proletariat also to rural Russia has stood out prominently. During that entire time a considerable number of both Soviet rural estates and agricultural communes have been created, but up till now they are merely submerged among the many millions of individual peasants' estates. True, that the conditions of organizations of supply have made it possible this year, as can be seen from experience, to arrange for a more systematic and better organized supply for the villages than that of the preceding year. This already yields definite practical results. The grain crops this year promise to be considerably better than they were last year. All this, of course, bears testimony to the fact that the organization which we have been putting into practice is effective.

But at the same time we must bear in mind that the questions of distribution and supply remain among the sorest and most difficult problems in our entire economic life. It is due to this that speculation still has a large opportunity for development.

The positive results which have been achieved in this domain are accounted for, chiefly, by the fact that the large laboring masses have been drawn into the work of the various bodies in charge of distribution, that these latter have been consolidated, and the entire Soviet apparatus for distribution amalgamated with the cooperative system.

Thus, if we were to summarize briefly the final results of the economic policy of the Soviet Government during the second year of its rule, we might say that our economic policy during the second year consisted first in placing our economic activity on a war footing, second, in the transmission from mere regulation of our economic life to direct management, and inducing the laboring masses to direct participation in this work, and third, in raising production, taking into account all the concrete conditions under which we were compelled to work.

The third year which is only beginning to dawn in the life of the Soviet Government will in all probability bring with it great changes in our interrelations with the outside world.

When the management of the economic life is centralized, when the means of production are socialized, it will be impossible to crush by means of economic isolation, a country as rich in various natural resources, as is Russia.

The third year raises before us problems of further coordination between the city and the country, between manufacturing and farming, between the supply of the raw material and the finished product. Before us rise the problems of further improving our organs of government with the object of raising their productivity, increasing the speed of their operation, bettering their composition, and improving their internal structure. We are further confronted by the problem of developing our productive forces, especially as regards procuring fuel, and in the domain of electrotechnical work. We shall have to cope with the problems of increasing production and improving the system of distribution.

Our economic policy will have to be directed chiefly toward the solution of our practical economic problems. As soon as the changed conditions the world over permit it, our policy will be directed toward the solution of broader questions of Russia's economic development. At the present moment and in the immediate future all our energies must be used for the solution of the fundamental problem—the final annihilation of the aggressive counter-revolutionary forces, which, to a considerable extent, have already been shorn of their strength and defeated, but which are now making their last attempt to overthrow the Soviet Government.

*Soviet Russia*, Vol. 2, No. 9 (February 28, 1920), pp. 1-3.



## CIVIL WAR CONDITIONS IN THE UKRAINE

December 1, 1919

*By late 1919 civil war, foreign invasion, economic and social disintegration, political mismanagement and other problems left many areas not merely in chaos but brutalized. Alsberg's account of the situation of the region from Kiev and Kharkov south to Odessa is remarkable not only for the picture of the times which it paints, but for its balance and sense of the complexity of events at a time when most reporting was heavily distorted by political bias. He has little patience for the White armies, here at the end of their rope, but neither does he excuse Bolshevik excesses. His sympathy is with the suffering people caught up in the turmoil and he does not reduce them to ideological abstractions. His description of the functioning of hospitals would apply to most institutions. Alsberg was an American journalist.*

Henry G. Alsberg  
IN THE WAKE OF DENIKIN

Odessa, December 1, 1919

Practically every train from Odessa to Kiev, except the one I travelled in, was held up, looted, and robbed. We went through free because we had an armored car and locomotive hitched to either end of our train. This honor was accorded, not to me, but to our military attache, Lieutenant Smith, who had the kindness to take me along with him. And, armored train notwithstanding, we were delayed for hours until the road ahead of us could be cleared. Coming from Kiev to Kharkov, I travelled in the very comfortably appointed shiblushka of

a colonel of General von Bredow's staff. A shiblushka is a freight car. We had to avoid Kursk on account of the proximity of the Bolsheviks. We could not go by way of Poltava, because Makhno had been there and looted the town and was still athwart the railway. So we dodged in and out by way of devious branch lines till we arrived at Kharkov. We could not travel by night for fear of being derailed. In passing through every considerable forest, those of us that had them unlimbered our shooting irons in expectation of a hold-up.

By lifting one rail a bandit can get a train very easily. I asked why these bands did not blow up a bridge. The answer was that a bridge could not be repaired in view of southern Russia's present state of demoralization, economic and mental. Hence no more trains would come through to loot.

By reason of the superficiality of his occupation, the situation in the rear of Denikin's army is bad and steadily growing worse. What ruined Kolchak may also ruin Denikin. It may be said that railway transportation in his territory is at the lowest imaginable ebb. In addition to the bandits' activity there is the terrible fuel scarcity. The coal in the Don basin, despite optimistic reports from propaganda headquarters, is not being mined to any visible extent. Wood is used almost exclusively on the railroad, except in the region of the Don. It happens quite frequently that trains have to stop while passengers and train hands go off to look for an old shed to break up and stoke the engine. So his army at the front is badly supplied. The army at Kiev has not had any new supplies for months, and is quite in tatters, almost as bad as Petlura's army. Meanwhile the banditry at his rear, instead of decreasing, goes on and grows. Makhno has reached such respectable stature that you might now call him a revolutionary leader. He has 25,000 peasants with him. He, as well as the smaller bandits, are popular. They all promise the peasants the land, which Denikin dare not do. Also they bring useful loot into the villages, clothes and furs and shoes from the town bourgeoisie, and also luxuries. You can see the most beautiful and costly things adorning the humble Ukrainian peasant's hut. I saw one family that drank out of silver goblets. When things get too hot for a bandit chief, he sends his men back to their villages to disappear among their friends.

Denikin's troops are to a large extent ex-Bolshevik soldiers. The explanation is that after every battle—and this holds good of Bolsheviks and Denikin as well—all the captured officers are killed, and those of the soldiers whose papers show that they were volunteers meet a similar fate. The balance of the prisoners is given the choice of enlisting with its captors' army or being shot. I asked in Kiev, while visiting the hospitals, where the hospital for wounded Bolshevik prisoners was. The answer proved identical with that of the boy eating the apple, who, in response to a demand for the core on the part of his little sister, answered "There ain't going to be no core."

There are no wounded Bolshevik prisoners. We reviewed a company of soldiers drilling at the Kiev front. Our interpreter asked all of those who were ex-Bolsheviks to raise their hands. Sixty per cent raised their hands. You can imagine that in such an army the morale is not good. To tell the truth, the morale of neither side, among the rank and file, is anything to brag of. A British artillery officer at Cirkasse told me that there were few bayonet charges or hand-to-hand fights except when the Cossacks were involved. It is merely a question of who starts retreating first. The anonymous rank and file deserts with alacrity to the other side. But the greatest alacrity is shown by the peasant lads in sneaking off home to their villages at first opportunity. "Back to the farm" is their great cry.

While speaking of morale we naturally come to the question of discipline. You on the other side of the water have heard of Bolshevik excesses. Excesses have taken place. During their last three days' stay in Kiev the Bolshevik Cheka (extraordinary commission) made a pyramid of 250 dead in the courtyard of their buildings. Indignant Volunteer Army officers showed me where the brains of the victims had been spattered against the walls. But these indignant officers will not tell of the 250 Jews killed by the Volunteer Army on their

occupation of Kiev, nor will they tell of the 150 young girls violated, or of the Jews hacked to pieces by wanton soldiery. I have the complete reports of the Kiev Committee for the Regeneration of Russia, a Jewish organization. It makes the most terrible reading. In an appeal to General Denikin for protection, this committee states that it has actual records of over 1,200 people murdered by the Volunteer Army, and records of countless others wounded and maltreated. In Kiev, of 35,000 Jewish families, 20,000 were robbed and pillaged by the Volunteer Army. And while I was in Kiev this state of affairs was still continuing. Every morning a crowd of people came to my room and asked for American protection. Came, among others, a young Jewish girl, a graduate physician, visiting physician formerly in one of the hospitals, in a state of hysteria. "Three officers came into my room last night. I jumped out of the window. They stole everything I had. For God's sake take me from Kiev. I can't stay in my room. I'm afraid."

What are we Americans doing in this matter? Shall it come to the point when we shall feel as did a British woman in Kiev, who said to me: "I can't stand it any longer. I have seen these brutes all togged out in British uniforms, uniforms we sent from England, do things that I can't speak of without shuddering. I am going home by the first train I can get." What are Americans doing in Siberia, helping Kolchak's army without a positive assurance that it will not repeat, or has not already repeated, the deeds of the Volunteers? If the Bolsheviks have been bloody and ruthless, that does not excuse Denikin.

This lawlessness against the Jews is having its natural result. The army has gotten quite out of hand. It pillages an robs and rapes and murders wherever it goes. And the worst is that the officers of lower rank take part in these outrages. I have seen the fingers of officers covered with diamonds. The terror following in the wake of the Cossacks is very great. A woman, speaking very good English, with her husband's registration card, showing he was a soldier in the American army, stopped me in the streets of Rostov. She said: "In 1917 my husband sent me over here to get his mother and little sister in Poltava. Then came the Cossacks, killed his mother, assaulted his sister, who died of the effects, and robbed us of everything we had. Can't you get me home?" In all the Russian cities there are *bona fide* American citizens who walk in daily danger of their lives. But there is no American consul to help them get out. I believe there is somebody in or near Rostov. But there was nobody in Kiev or Odessa, where the need is greatest. Moreover, our Government has issued strict orders to its consuls everywhere that Russians are not to be allowed to come to the United States. And even if a man of Russian birth has his American passport showing his American citizenship, the consuls in Rumania or Constantinople, if he can get as far as that, have to telegraph to Washington for special permission in order to allow his transit to America. In other words, there are two kinds of American citizenship. Moreover, under what authority does our State Department keep out Russians in general and let in other nationalities? God knows the state of southern Russia is such now that any one who can get out should be given a refuge if he is shown to be qualified for entry to our country under the immigration law. Our Bolshephobia drives us to condemn thousands to ruin and even death, and to forget our holiest traditions.

This brings me to a discussion of the condition of the civil population. A terrible apathy exists everywhere. At Kiev it was at its highest pitch. Kiev had been taken back and forth by Bolsheviks, Germans, Petlura, and Denikin, about eight times. I imagine by the time this reaches America it will have been taken a last time by the Bolsheviks. At any rate, while I was in Kiev the cannon made my heart palpitate every night. I said to myself "I don't mind being shot while marching with a gang I believe in, but I certainly object to being shot for the sake of the Volunteer Army." You see, I roomed with the American military attache and was thus in a quasi-military situation. The front was only twelve kilometres from the city. You could go out to within two kilometres of it in a trolley car.

Meanwhile there is a crying need for all manufactured articles in southern Russia. One American, who had a shipment to Odessa, said he was finally forced to take diamonds, rugs, and art objects in payment. He, in other words, joined the speculators. That is all that is doing now in the large cities. Jewels that the bourgeoisie has been forced to sell for practically nothing now glitter in Kiev, Odessa, Rostov, and Sevastopol shop windows at wild prices. Food gets cornered. Exchange furnishes a gambling medium. One day the speculators play with pounds sterling, the next with dollars, the next with Rumanian leis. Fortunes are won and lost overnight. Other people manage, through bribery, to get permission to travel back and forth from Odessa to Constantinople. They load their pockets with jewelry bought from impoverished aristocrats in Russia, very cheap, and sold to Constantinople profiteers very high. There is no denying the fact that Jews form a considerable element of these speculating groups. This does not by any means decrease the prevalent anti-Semitism. But masses of non-Jews, and even government officials, are engaged similarly. The bulk of the population, however, simply sits back and stares sullenly at these crooked proceedings. The workers in the towns, who are still close to the country, have simply, as in Petlura's territory, gone back to their villages. Those that remain in the cities get unheard-of pay. In short, the bourgeoisie, aside from the speculators, is between the upper and the nether millstone. It does not require the Bolsheviks for its destruction. Civil war is doing that rapidly. And in addition to the general misery there is the special misery produced by the almost absolute lack of fuel. In Kiev, during my stay, we had weather colder than any we ever have in New York. Yet nobody had any wood to heat with, not to mention coal. The only place one could exist in was one's bed. When finally the really cold weather comes in Russia, the suffering will be unbelievable.

Sanitary conditions are bad. I had occasion to visit many hospitals during my trip. I found the military institutions rather better off than the civil, which were in terrible shape. The worst hospital I saw was in Kiev, where, in the largest city hospital, three people ill of typhus were lying on each little cot. The rooms were unheated; in order to preserve a little warmth the windows were pasted shut with paper. Consequently the stench was frightful. At this very time many military hospitals in Kiev were pretty nearly empty because most of the sick and wounded soldiers had been sent to Kharkov. Kiev was considered to be too near the front. Thanks to my protests, the army sanitary department ordered the military hospitals to take patients from the civilian institutions. And so in a few days the big city hospital at least was no longer overcrowded, and sick people no longer had to wait twenty-four hours in the reception ward for a bed. Most of the hospitals were lamentably short of medicines, linens, and materials and equipment. I am sure I do not know how many times the Red Cross has been told that medicines and hospital equipment are urgently needed. At least six reports to this effect have been sent to Paris. While typhus patients die for want of salvarsan injections, and operations can take place in many hospitals only once a week for lack of chloroform, the Red Cross warehouses in Rumania are full of salvarsan and also of chloroform that is evaporating.

The Bolshevik occupation of Kiev added a rather interesting chapter to the history of the medical institutions. As always, the Bolsheviks gave with both hands to the hospitals as well as to all philanthropic organizations. In fact, one finds that the Bolsheviks were not particularly destructive of the established instruments of civilization. Most of these they took over and ran, perhaps in a rather disorganized fashion. The cooperatives they did not succeed in ruining. I had visits from chiefs of all these cooperatives and learned that they were in very active operation. Everywhere you saw the cooperative stores full of people. Even commerce and shopkeeping have survived, although most of the shops were closed by the Bolsheviks. Human habits do not alter so quickly and so radically. Unless you kill all the shopkeepers and all the people that have been accustomed to buying at shops, you cannot get rid of modern commerce, the wholesaler, the middleman, and the retailer. The chaos in

the territory held by Denikin, and the fear of pogroms and persecution, have done more to paralyze business in southern Russia than the interlude of Bolshevism. The world of art, of course, was well protected by the Bolsheviks. Artists, and among these were even the most humble pretenders to the title, were excellently paid and protected. Opera and theaters were going constantly. Yet, I must admit that the few artists I met personally seemed to have a violent prejudice in favor of the old bourgeois system.

But to return to the hospitals under Bolshevik rule. Pecuniarily they were well fixed. But in every hospital the Soviet Republic founded a governing committee made up of patients, hospital workers, and a delegate from the Government. I think the doctors, being suspected of a sycophantic love of the bourgeoisie, were not given a voice in this committee. Nevertheless, in many hospitals things worked out rather well. But in some, due probably to the tactlessness of the chief physician, things went on in a comic fashion. The committee in such an event became unruly. The hospital workers refused to work. The patients struck. One physician told me that it happened frequently that a pneumonia patient, seeing him give a typhus patient a salvarsan injection would demand the same treatment. "This is a free country and everybody has a right to the same treatment." Argument proved useless. The pneumonia patient threatened to have the doctor arrested as a bourgeois. And the doctor gave the injection. At any rate this is a good story. In other hospitals the patients well enough to get around and fend for themselves declared that only those people who worked should get anything to eat. And this theory they took away and ate the food intended for the patients ill abed. Also a good story.

About Denikin's government as an organization little need be said here. For the most part, this government, like that of Petlura, is chiefly facade. Denikin and his two generals, Lukhowsky and Romanovsky, do most of the governing. I was told all about how many milliards of income the government expected in the current year. I, however, said to the propaganda chief, who was filling me full of these day-dreams: "Be on the level with me, old man. Isn't Denikin's chief source of present income the printing press?" He tried to dodge with incoherencies about new governments always having to face difficulties. But I pinned imagination down to facts, like a gorgeous butterfly on a deal board. "Well, yes, we do rather keep up with our current requirements in the way you suggest." "Put it there, old man," I said. And we shook hands and parted the best of friends.

*The Nation*, January 10, 1920, pp. 38-40, with spelling modifications by the editor.



## RULES OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

December 4, 1919

*The party had updated its rules in 1917, but the seizure of power quickly made those obsolete. The new party rules adopted in 1919 reflected the new realities of holding political power, such as in the sections on regional organizations. Other sections reflected the concern over extending party influence throughout society. This document defined the party in fundamental and lasting ways. About three-quarters of the rules were new since 1917, and many of the remaining ones were revised. The notations in brackets refer to the 1917 party rules and indicate whether the clause is new, revised or unchanged; they were made by the editor of the translation from which this is taken and have been retained here because they show at quick reference the extent of changes.*

**RULES OF THE RKP(b)****I. ON PARTY MEMBERS**

1. [As in 1.174, art. 1 with minor changes of wording] A party member is anyone who accepts the party Programme, works in one of its organizations, obeys party decisions, and pays membership dues.

2. [Revises 1.174, art. 2] New members are accepted by local party committees from among candidates and are approved by the next general meeting of the organization.

*Note.* In exceptional cases, upon the recommendation of two party members from before October 1917, persons who are not candidates may be brought into the party. The same exception is permitted during party week, according to Central Committee instructions.

3. [New] Any member of one [party] organization who is transferred to the area of work of another organization, is registered in the latter with the agreement of the first organization.

4. [Revises 1.174, art. 4] The question of expelling anyone from the party is decided by the general meeting of that person's organization. The resolution on expulsion takes effect only when approved by the guberniia committee, with the person being removed from party work until approval of his expulsion. The party press will publish the names of those expelled, together with the reasons for the expulsion.

**II. ON CANDIDATE MEMBERS OF THE PARTY**

5. [New] All persons who wish to join as party members pass through a period of candidacy, which is intended to acquaint them with the Programme and tactics of the party and to verify their personal qualities.

6. [New] New persons are accepted as candidates upon recommendation by two party members of six months' standing after the recommendations have been verified by the local party committee.

7. [New] Workers and peasants must remain candidates for at least two months, others at least six months.

8. [New] Candidates may attend open general meetings of the party organization with a consultative vote.

9. [New] Candidates pay the customary membership dues to the treasury of the local party committee.

[Articles 7 and 8 of the 1917 Rules deleted (on units of party organization and confirmation of new party organizations)].

**III. ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE PARTY**

10. [As in 1.174, art.5, with minor word changes] The guiding principle of the organizational structure of the party is democratic centralism.

11. [New] The party is built on the basis of democratic centralism on territorial lines: the organization serving a given district is considered to be higher than all the organizations serving parts of this district.

12. [Revises 1.174, art. 6] All party organizations are autonomous in resolving local problems.

13. [New] The highest leading organ of each organization is the general meeting, conference, or congress.

14. [New] The general meeting, conference, or congress elect a committee which is their executive organ and directs all current work of the local organization.

15. [New] The party's organizational structure is as follows:

- a. territory of the RSFSR—the All-Russian Congress, the Central Committee;
- b. oblasts and Soviet republics within the RSFSR—oblast conferences, oblast committees;
- c. guberniias—guberniia conferences, guberniia committees;
- d. uyezds—uezd conferences, uezd committees;

e. volosts—volost meetings, volost committees;

f. enterprises, villages, Red Army units, institutions—general cell meetings, cell bureaus.

16. [New] The order of subordination and accountability, as well as of adoption or questioning of all party decisions (from the highest authority to the lowest), is as follows: All-Russian congress, Central Committee, oblast conference, oblast committee, guberniia conference, etc.

17. [New] For special forms of party work special sections are formed (national sections, sections for work among women, among youth, etc.). Sections are attached to committees and are directly subordinate to them. The procedure for organizing sections is set out in special instructions approved by the Central Committee.

18. [New] Membership of all lower organizations up to the uezd is approved by the uezd committee with the sanction of the guberniia committee; at the uezd level—by the guberniia committee with the sanction of the oblast committee, and in the absence of the latter—by the Central Committee; at the guberniia level—by the oblast committee with the sanction of the Central Committee, and in the absence of the oblast committee—by the Central Committee directly.

19. [Revises 1.174, art. 6] Following its definite approval, every party organization has the right to acquire its press, but only with the sanction of the next higher party organization.

#### IV. ON THE CENTRAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE PARTY

20. [Revises 1.174, art. 10] The party congress is the highest organ of the party. Regular congresses are convened annually. Extraordinary congresses are convened by the Central Committee on its own initiative or at the request of at least one-third of the party members represented at the preceding party congress. The convocation of a party congress and its agenda are announced at least a month and a half before the congress. Extraordinary congresses are convened on two months' notice. A congress has a quorum if at least half the party members who were represented at the previous congress are represented at it.

Standards of representation at a congress are set by the Central Committee and the regular pre-congress conference.

21. [As in 1.174, art. 11] If the Central Committee does not convene an extraordinary congress as set forth in paragraph I [sic; should read '20'] above, the organizations demanding it have the right to form an organizational committee possessing the rights of the Central Committee with respect to the convening of the congress.

22. [As in 1.174, art. 12] The congress:

a. hears and approves the reports of the Central Committee, the Revision Commission, and other central institutions;

b. revises and alters the party Programme;

c. defines the tactical line of the party on current problems;

d. elects the Central Committee and the Revision Commission, etc.

23. [Revises 1.174, art. 13] The Central Committee is elected with a membership of nineteen (twelve candidate members). If the Central Committee loses members, they are replaced from among the candidate members elected by the congress, in the order determined by the congress.

24. [As in 1.174, art. 13 with minor rewording and additions] The Central Committee represents the party in its relations with other parties and institutions, organizes the various party institutions and directs their activities, appoints the editors of the central organs working under its supervision, organizes and directs enterprises of general significance for the party, allocates party funds and personnel, and controls the central treasury.

The Central Committee directs the work of the central soviet and social organizations through the party fractions.



The Central Committee holds at least two plenums monthly, with the meeting day being set in advance.

25. [New] The Central Committee organizes: for political work—a Political Bureau; for organizational work—an Organizational Bureau and a Secretariat, headed by a secretary who is a member of the Organizational Bureau of the Central Committee.

26. [New] Once every three months the Central Committee convenes a party conference of the representatives of the guberniia and capital [Moscow and Petrograd] committees of the party.

27. [New] Once a month the Central Committee circulates to the guberniia and capital [Moscow and Petrograd] committees of the party a written report on its activities.

28. [Revises 1.174, art. 14] The Revision Commission consists of three persons, periodically reviews the state of the treasury and of all Central Committee enterprises, and reports to the next party congress.

#### V. ON OBLAST ORGANIZATIONS

29. [New] With the permission of the Central Committee the party organizations of an oblast may unite. The oblast committee is elected at the oblast conference. The oblast boundaries are determined by the oblast conference and are approved by the Central Committee.

30. [New] Party organizations serving the territory of a federative part of the RSFSR are in all respects equivalent to oblast organizations of the party, i.e., they are wholly subordinate to the Central Committee of the RKP(b).

31. [New] An ordinary oblast conference is convened by the oblast committee every six months; an extraordinary conference is convoked by decision of the oblast committee or of one-half of the total membership of the organizations in the oblast.

The norm of representation at the oblast conference is set by the oblast committee by agreement with the guberniia committees within the oblast.

The oblast conference hears and approves the reports of the oblast committees, of the revision commission, and of other oblast institutions, elects the oblast committee and the revision commission.

32. [New] The oblast committee is elected at an ordinary conference.

For the conduct of current work the oblast committee elects a presidium of not less than three persons.

The oblast committee organizes the various party institutions within the oblast; directs their activities, appoints the editors of the oblast party organ which operates under its supervision; organizes and directs enterprises of general significance for the oblast; allocates party funds and personnel within the oblast; and controls the oblast treasury. The oblast committee directs the activities of soviet executive organs through the party fractions and reports in detail to the RKP(b) Central Committee every three months on its activities.

The oblast committee meets twice a month, with the meeting day being set in advance.

#### VI. ON GUBERNIIA ORGANIZATIONS

33. [New] The regular guberniia party conference is convened by the guberniia committee once every three months, the special conference by decision of the guberniia committee or one-third of the total membership of the organizations in the guberniia.

The guberniia conference hears and approves the reports of the guberniia committee, the revision commission, and the other guberniia institutions, elects the committee and the revision commission.

34. [New] The guberniia committee is elected by the conference and must include party workers of the guberniia centre and of the other major working-class centres of the guberniia.

The guberniia committee meets twice a month, with the meeting day being set in advance.

For the conduct of current work the guberniia committee appoints a presidium of not less than five of its members.

35. [New] The guberniia committee approves the membership of the uezd or raion organizations of the guberniia with the sanction of the oblast committees or of the Central Committee; organizes the various party institutions within the guberniia and directs their activities; appoints the editors of the guberniia party organ, which operates under its supervision; organizes all enterprises of significance of the guberniia, allocates party funds and personnel within the guberniia; and controls the guberniia treasury. The guberniia committee directs the activities of the soviet, the trade unions, and the co-operatives through the corresponding party fractions. The guberniia committee submits a detailed monthly report to the Central Committee on its activities and on the activities of the uezd committees.

36. [New] During the intervals between conferences the guberniia committee makes periodic informational reports to the general meeting or conference of the city organization; furthermore, every month the guberniia committee convenes a guberniia conference of the representatives of uezd and city organizations.

37. [New] City committees, subordinated to guberniia committees, may be formed in guberniia cities only with the permission of the guberniia committees and with the sanction of the Central Committee.

*Note.* The city committees in Petrograd and Moscow are in all respects equivalent to guberniia committees.

#### VII. ON UEZD ORGANIZATIONS

38. [New] The uezd conference hears and approves the report of the uezd committee and elects a committee and revision commission. The conference meets at least once every three months.

39. [New] The uezd committee is elected by the uezd conference and has a membership of five to nine persons.

The uezd committee appoints a presidium of three of its members, of whom the secretary must be released from all except party work.

40. [New] The uezd committee approves the membership of the volost organizations and cells within the uezd with the sanction of the guberniia committee, organizes the various party institutions within the uezd and directs their activities, organizes all enterprises that have significance for the uezd, arranges conferences of volost cells, and controls the uezd party treasury.

*Note.* Only the uezd committee may issue a party organ and party literature within the uezd.

41. [New] Through party fractions the uezd committee directs the work of the uezd executive committee, the soviet, and all volost soviets, as well as of trade unions, co-operative and other associations in the uezd.

#### VIII. ON VOLOST ORGANIZATIONS

42. [New] The highest organ of the volost is the general meeting of the party members of the volost.

*Note.* In large volosts where it is difficult to convene a general meeting, a volost conference may be substituted for the general meeting.

43. [New] The volost general meeting is convened at least once a month. The general meeting: a) accepts and expels party members; b) elects the volost committee and revision commission; c) discusses and approves the reports of the volost committee and the revision commission; d) elects the delegates to the guberniia, uezd, and other conferences; e) discusses and approves the report of the volost executive committee fraction.

44. [New] The volost committee of three to five members serving for three months is elected at the general meeting (or conference).

45. [New] The volost committee guides and directs the work of all organizations within the volost, registers all party members, organizes the distribution of literature, holds public rallies, lectures, etc., organizes new cells and submits them to the uezd committee for

approval, controls the volost party treasury, reports on its activities once a month to the uезд, guberniia, oblast committees and to the Central Committee, directs the work of the volost soviet and of its executive committee through the party fraction.

46. [New] The revision commission reviews the state of the volost treasury once a month.

#### IX. ON PARTY CELLS

47. [New] The basis of the party organization is the party cell. The cell is approved by the uезд, city, or raion committee and has at least three members.

*Note.* The cell which has grown to large dimensions may, with the permission of the appropriate committee, be subdivided into several cells, constituting one subraion.

48. [New] The cell is the organization which binds the worker and peasant masses to the guiding organ of the party in the given locality. The cell has the task: 1) of bringing the party's slogans and decisions to the masses; 2) of attracting new members; 3) of helping the local committee in its organizational and agitational work; 4) of participating actively as a party organ in the economic and political life of the country.

49. [New] For the conduct of current work the cell elects a bureau of three members serving for one month.

#### X. ON PARTY DISCIPLINE

50. [New] The strictest party discipline is the primary duty of all party members and all party organizations. Resolutions of party centres must be implemented rapidly and accurately. At the same time, within the party there is entirely free discussion of all disputed issues of party life until a decision is taken.

51. [New] Failure to implement resolutions of higher organizations and other offences recognized as criminal by party opinion are punished as follows: in the case of the organization, by censure, appointment of a provisional committee from above, and general re-registration (dissolution of the organization); in the case of the individual party members, by party censure, public censure, temporary removal from responsible party and soviet work, temporary removal from any party or soviet work, expulsion from the party, expulsion from the party with a report of the offence to the administrative and judicial authorities.

52. [New] For the examination of various disciplinary offences each committee has the right to set special meeting days and to form special commissions, but the latter may not, in any sense, be transformed into permanent party courts.

53. [New] Disciplinary offences are examined by committees and general meetings in the usual order up through the established authorities.

#### XI. ON PARTY FINANCES

54. [New] The sources of funds of the organization are membership dues, subsidies from higher party organizations, and other receipts.

55. [Revises 1.174, art. 3] Membership dues are set at not less than one-half of one per cent of wages. There are four categories of membership dues, depending upon the amount earned. The first category pays one-half of one per cent, the second-one per cent, the third-two per cent, and the fourth-three per cent. Precise figures for assessable wage levels are set by instructions.

56. [New] New members pay initiation dues of five rubles.

57. [New] In the case of persons, such as peasants, whose wages are indeterminate, membership dues are established by the local guberniia committee on the basis of general norms.

58. [As in 1.74, note to art. 3] Party members are considered to have left the organization if they have failed to pay dues for three months without an acceptable excuse; this is brought to the notice of the general meeting.

59. [Revises 1.174, art. 9] All local organization must forward to the Central Committee ten per cent of all membership dues and other unassigned monetary receipts. Volost

organizations forward sixty per cent to the treasury of the uezd committee, this including ten per cent for the Central Committee; the uezd committee forwards thirty per cent to the treasury of the guberniia committee.

Ten per cent of all the guberniia committee's receipts are forwarded to the treasury of the Central Committee.

## XII. ON FRACTIONS IN NON-PARTY INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

60. [New] In all non-party congresses, meetings, institutions, and organizations (soviets, executive committees, trade unions, communes, etc.) which have at least three party members, fractions are organized. Their task is the comprehensive strengthening of party influence, implementation of its policy in the non-party environment, and the establishment of party supervision over the work of all of these institutions and organizations.

61. [New] When matters affecting any fraction are being discussed in a committee, the fraction will send its representatives to the plenum of the committee with a consultative vote. For the conduct of current work the fraction may elect a bureau.

62. [New] Fractions, regardless of their importance are entirely subordinate to the party. In all matters with respect to which there exists a legal decision of the appropriate party organization, the fraction must adhere to this decision strictly and undeviatingly. The committee has the right to introduce any member into the fraction or recall him from it but must inform the fraction of the reasons for such a step. The fraction is autonomous in matters of its internal life and current work. If there is a substantial disagreement between the party committee and the fraction on any matter within the latter's competence, the committee must examine the matter a second time with representatives of the fraction and adopt a final decision which is immediately to be carried out by the fraction.

63. [New] The fraction, together with the appropriate party organization, proposes candidates for all the major positions in the institution or organization in which the fraction is working. Transfers from one position to another are handled in exactly the same way.

64. [New] All matters of political significance subject to discussion in the fraction must be discussed in the presence of representatives of the committee. Committees must delegate their representatives as soon as the fraction so requests.

65. [New] Any matter subject to decision by the non-party organization in which the fraction works must first be discussed in the fraction's general meeting or its bureau.

66. [New] At the general meeting of the non-party organization in which the fraction is working all fraction members must vote unanimously on any matters which have been decided within the fraction. Persons violating this rule are subject to the usual disciplinary procedures.

McNeal, *Resolutions*, Vol. 2, Gregor, *Early Soviet Period*, pp. 90-98. For the 1917 party rules, referred to in the brackets, see McNeal, Vol. 1.



## LABOR ARMIES

December 16, 1919

*Militarization of labor was resorted to sporadically in 1918-19. Also, the obligation of labor was embodied in the constitution of 1918 (see above). Ideas about obligatory labor and a militia system for the army joined in late 1919 with economic pressures and the winding down of the Civil War to make feasible the idea of labor armies. Trotsky quickly became the leading*

*advocate of this concept. Although the main elaboration as well as actual practice came only in early 1920, the first clear exposition was provided in these theses by Trotsky.*

## THE TRANSITION TO UNIVERSAL LABOUR SERVICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE MILITIA SYSTEM

### THESES

1. Socialist economy presupposes a general plan that embraces the entire territory, with all its natural resources, means of production and live human powers, which resources and forces of every kind the proletariat exploits, within the limits of the area covered by the state, just as fully as any individual entrepreneur endeavours to exploit the forces and resources at his command in his factory or his agricultural estate.

2. The continuity and completeness of the production process must be sustained and ensured by *universal labour service*, under which every able-bodied citizen, within certain age-limits, is obliged to devote a certain part of his time to one branch or another of the production process.

3. Complete and fully efficient *allocation of living labour power* between agriculture, manufacturing industry and transport, and also between the different branches of agriculture and manufacturing industry, can be achieved only gradually, through economic experience in satisfying the demands of society, by organising labour in a planned way through increasingly precise recording of labour power, its mobilisation and application.

4. Until universal labour service has become normal, having become consolidated by habit into something unquestioned and irrevocable for everyone (which development will be brought about through education, both social and scholastic, and will find full expression only in the next generation)—until then, for a considerable time yet, the transition to the regime of universal labour service must inevitably be maintained by measures of a coercive character, that is, in the last analysis, by the armed force of the proletarian state.

5. It is an elementary condition for any further economic development that the workers in manufacturing industry and transport and the urban population generally, be ensured a supply of necessary *foodstuffs*. Until manufacturing industry has been revived to a sufficient extent, and until a system of natural and mutually advantageous products-exchange has been established between manufacturing industry and agriculture, the extraction of foodstuffs from the countryside will naturally depend on payment by the well-to-do sections of the peasantry of a *tax in kind*, the correct imposition of which can be ensured only by the coercive power of the state.

6. It is out of the question for an immediate leap to be made from the present situation of maximum ruin of productive forces and economic chaos, in which fragments from the past are combined with rudiments of the future, into a finished, centralised economy on a country-wide scale. There must inevitably be a protracted period during which efforts from above to centralise the economy on new social foundations will be supplemented by attempts and strivings to *resuscitate local economic centres* through the forces and resources of neighbouring areas.

7. The state power of the proletariat must take care not only to avoid stifling local initiative in the name of a schematic state economic plan but also, and on the contrary, to give support in every way to local initiative, to sustain it with technical ideas and material aid, supplying the necessary correctives and modifying its own country-wide plan in accordance with the tempo and scale of the development of individual economic centres.

8. It follows that universal labour service can in no case be understood as impersonal labour service by which certain age-groups are fully mobilised and allocated in accordance with a schematic economic plan, as is done by any government, including the Soviet Government, where military service is concerned. On the contrary, the task consists in finding a fulcrum for labour service in local and regional labour connections, habits and customs,

basing labour service on certain *territorial and production districts*, defined on the basis of natural-historical conditions and those determined by production and social life.

9. These territorial-economic districts must form the basis both of the Soviet territorial-administrative system (region, province, *uyezd*, *volost*) and of the local military organs (commissariats), in the course of the gradual transition from the standing army to the militia.

10. The significance of the *militia system* lies in its bringing the army close, territorially and in terms of everyday life, to the economic process, so that the live human forces of particular economic areas are at the same time the live human forces of particular military units.

11. *Registration of the population* for military service must be combined with registration for labour service, so that the existing apparatus of the War Department (the local military commissariats), appropriately modified and constantly improved, may serve as the apparatus for mass conscription of labour.

12. When a particular unit of the Red Army is demobilised, its best cadres must be distributed in the most expedient way, that is, the way best adapted to local conditions of productive life, so as thereby to provide a ready-made apparatus for administering the units of the militia. The cadres of regiments, brigades and divisions, assigned to the above-mentioned territorial and production districts and their subdivisions, will perform the work of universal military training of the workers and those peasants who do not exploit the labour of others, in accordance with a programme that will fully ensure the fighting capacity of the militia army.

13. *The cadres of the militia* must be gradually renewed, as regards, their personal composition, so as to ensure the closest connection with the economic life of a given area, as a result of which the cadres of a division stationed in a territory which, for example, includes a mine, with the rural periphery adjacent thereto, will consist of the best elements of the local proletariat.

14. In order to achieve this renewal of cadres, command courses must be distributed territorially in accordance with the economic and militia districts, and the best representatives of the local workers and peasants must be put through these courses.

15. The transition to the militia system must necessarily be gradual, so that the change-over in the military system does not deprive the Soviet Republic for a single day of the necessary power of defence. For this purpose, a certain number of divisions must be retained from the present Red Army, and stationed in the most important or most threatened directions. The older age-groups and, in general, the longest serving Red Army men, can be discharged from the divisions fairly quickly and replaced by the 1901 class of conscripts.

16. Thus, for the task of introducing the food tax and labour service, the state must and will have at its disposal in the transition period a certain number of the most experienced, reliable and disciplined units, consisting predominantly of proletarians.

17. The next task in the sphere of economic construction is the compiling of a 'small' production plan, that is, one designed for the immediate future and taking as the point of departure for its calculations the most urgent needs and possibilities of production.

18. This plan must, above all, include precise requirements of labour-power for the coal and iron mines, the peat and shale deposits, the most important factories and the state farms.

19. In the armies, a registration of the Red Army men by trades must at once be carried out, so that, when they are demobilised, the most highly skilled elements may at once be allocated appropriately in accordance with the 'small' economic plan.

20. As regards unskilled labour-power, this must be secured both by conscripting those age-groups not included in the Red Army and by early release from the army of recently-mobilised men on condition that they work for a certain period in enterprises close to their homes.

21. A commission must at once be set up, consisting of the most responsible workers in the Supreme Economic Council, with extensive involvement of the relevant specialists and

statisticians, to draw up a first rough draft of a scheme for the mobilisation of labour, corresponding to the 'small' production plan for the period immediately ahead.

22. The aforesaid plan must be handed over to the War Department so that it may take decisions, first, regarding the use of the methods and apparatus of army mobilisation for the purpose of the mobilisation of labour, and, secondly, regarding adaptation of the system of territorial-militia districts to the territorial-production districts.

23. The final elaboration of the system of labour service must be the task of an inter-departmental commission of representatives of the Supreme Economic Council, the War Department, the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, the People's Commissariat for Agriculture, Food and Labour, and the Central Trade Union Council.

24. Proceeding from all the above, I propose that the Central Committee assign the tasks resulting from these theses to the appropriate departments, and in the first place to the Supreme Economic Council and the People's Commissariat for Military Affairs.

Trotsky, *How the Revolution Armed*, Vol. 3, pp. 47-52.



LUNACHARSKY  
THE TASKS OF THE STATE CINEMA IN RUSSIA  
1919

*Film came to play an important role in the efforts of the new regime to reach and influence a largely illiterate or semi-literate population, and Soviet film gained world-wide fame in the 1920s and 1930s. As in other areas of the arts the government was able to give only fragmentary attention to it at first, but the film industry was nationalized in 1919 and Lunacharsky, under whose commissariat it fell, asserted that "a socialist government must imbue even film shows with a socialist spirit." Film was intended to serve the cause not only of winning the Civil War but of remaking society. This essay was written as an introduction to a collection of essays on the cinema.*

A.V. Lunacharsky

*The Tasks of the State Cinema in the RSFSR*

The state cinema in Russia faces quite unusual tasks. It is not simply a matter of nationalising production and film distribution and the direct control of cinemas. It is a matter of fostering a completely new spirit in this branch of art and education.

In the present impoverished state of the Russian economy we cannot count on producing films of a purely artistic, literary or even scientifically objective character and competing with foreign firms or replacing Russian private films. For the present, while trade is significantly restricted, we might perhaps borrow this kind of material from films that have already been made or imported from abroad; but this situation will not of course last for ever.

We must do what nobody else is either able or willing to do. We should remember that a socialist government must imbue even film shows with a socialist spirit.

There is absolutely no doubt that in this respect far more newsreel footage must be shot and there is no need for me to say more.

Furthermore, the main task of cinema in both its scientific and feature divisions is that of propaganda.

Generally speaking, every art, as Tolstoy once remarked, is above all a means of instilling the artist's emotions into the masses. Education in the wider sense of the word consists in

the dissemination of ideas among minds that would otherwise remain a stranger to them. Cinema can accomplish both these things with particular force: it constitutes, on the one hand, a visual clarion for the dissemination of ideas and, on the other hand, if we introduce elements of the refined, the poetic, the pathetic etc., it is capable of touching the emotions and thus becomes an apparatus of agitation. We must pay attention to these aspects above all. If there is a place where a stupid fear of tendentiousness becomes even more absurd that place is cinema. Generally speaking, tendentiousness is harmful only if it is petty; the great tendentiousness of a religious idea or of a broad socialist idea that approximates to it can only produce works of art, and it was not for nothing that Chekhov complained that the art of his time had been deprived of God and that no amount of talent on the part of the artist and no outward mastery can, even in isolation, act as a substitute for a life-giving idea.

A Communist government has such a life-giving idea and, with the minimum of attention and experience, this idea can be very easily conveyed in the appropriate artistic guise.

It seems to me that we must first of all produce a cultural-historical picture. It is impossible to imagine a richer source for cinema than the cultural history of mankind as a whole. This is, in the literal sense of the word, an inexhaustible source, and it is worth tapping it, starting with the life of primeval man so that the head really spins at the wealth of images that can be realised most fully through cinema.

But we must not be carried away by the full panoply of the past: we must concentrate only on moments that are important for agitation and propaganda. We must convey the history of the beginnings of the growth of the state in such a way that basic Communist ideas on the criminal nature and at the same time on the necessity of each state, on the development of man and his different forms, on the unique form of the state—the dictatorship of the poor or of the proletariat—are made clear to every viewer.

Just as important is the history of the Church, including the depiction of cults—the cruellest and most senseless—and also of all the abuses committed by the Christian Church but, with historical objectivity, we must clearly distinguish its democratic and positive aspects. It is very easy, having given due credit to the positive and idealistic aspects of Christianity, to show how they have been systematically falsified by ecclesiastics in the service of the state and the wealthy classes.

The history of political conflicts, in particular the history of the great French Revolution, and all kinds of important events of our recent revolutionary history, from the Decembrists to the October Revolution of 1917, must also be treated with all due care.

While in no way denying the enormous importance of a broader range of themes, depicting, for instance, the history of science (an unusually rich theme), including the history of inventions or the history of the highest culture, I think that, with our limited time and resources, we must not hesitate too much and in choosing between two pictures of roughly the same importance and value we must make the one that can speak to the mind and the heart more vividly from the standpoint of revolutionary propaganda.

Taylor and Christie, pp. 22-23.



## PROPAGANDA TRAINS

1919

*Among the striking innovations of the Civil War were the trains (and later steamboats) equipped with agitators and propaganda materials which toured the country to build support for the*



*Bolshevik cause. They were usually brightly painted with slogans and pictures designed to appeal to the peasantry, although some of the early ones were decorated with the reigning avant-garde artistic motifs. The following account of their activity probably was written in late 1919, and describes the trains of that year.*

By Jacob Okunev  
*A New Way for Culture Propaganda*

Lenin's train—that is what the peasants and workers call the train; it now carries the name of Lenin and recently returned to Moscow after a trip around the western part of the Soviet Republic.

This train consists of 15 cars, decorated with paintings in bright colors, with forceful and unmistakably revolutionary inscriptions. It contains a moving picture apparatus and screen, a book shop, and a branch of the telegraph bureau, which posted the latest news at every station and sent out bulletins with the latest telegrams. On this train were representatives of almost all of the People's Commissariats, and a staff of agitators.

The train has been in constant service for about two months. It has traveled through the governments of Pskov and Vitebsk, Lettonia, White Russia, Lithuania, and has extended its trips to Kharkov. It has made 25 long stops and covered 3590 versts. Everywhere it passed, tens of thousands of leaflets and revolutionary pamphlets were handed out, socialist and revolutionary literature distributed, with books of all kinds, meetings arranged, lectures held, while propaganda instructed and animated the masses. The Commissariat representatives who accompanied the train visited the soviet institutions and informed themselves as to the work of the local organizations, offering suggestions and aid. Around this special train, workers and peasants assembled and "flying meetings" took place. The speeches were made from the roofs of the cars, and revolutionary leaflets and pamphlets were scattered from the bookshop like snowflakes.

During its trip the train circulated books, papers, and pamphlets worth more than a half-million roubles, distributed free more than 150,000 proclamations and leaflets, posted more than 15,000 posters, and supplied 556 organizations with various publications. About 90,000 workers, peasants, and soldiers from the Red Army attended the lectures, meetings, and conferences; about sixty lectures were organized on all sorts of burning questions.

The local organization was informed by telegraph of the arrival of the train, and met it at the station. Sometimes the reception was very ceremonious. At Ryezhitsa, where the train arrived at night, workers and soldiers of the Red Army met it with banners, music, and torches. At the little station of Malinovka, the peasants from the adjoining villages had gathered, and their selected speaker made an address, concerning the train which carried the light of the class-conscious revolution to all corners of Russia.

It is impossible to give in a short article an account of all the work which this train accomplished on its two months' trip. Besides its agitation and the circulation of papers and pamphlets, the members of the Communist party who accompanied the train brought about improvements in the local organizations, listening to wishes and complaints of the residents and investigating the latter.

At the present time, five more trains of this kind are being organized, also boats for a similar purpose on the Volga and its tributaries, and motor trucks which will make it possible to reach places where neither railroads nor waterways are available. Agitators will penetrate the most hidden nooks of Soviet Russia, there to sow the hold fire of Revolution, to spread leaflets and pamphlets, and to waken the great masses of the peasants and the poor. Within a short time a train called "The October Revolution" will be sent to middle Russia and the regions around the Don.

Two other trains, "Communist" and "Red Army," are almost ready to be sent out on their errand. The whole of Soviet Russia will soon be covered with a living net of similar trains

and boats. Thanks to them, the center will come in contact with the farthest regions of the republic. It can listen to their wishes and answer their questions.

*Soviet Russia*, Vol. 2, No. 7 (February 14, 1920), p. 154.



## RUSSIA'S CURRENCY AND ECONOMIC SITUATION 1919

*By late 1919 the Russian economy was in terrible straits, a condition reflected in currency problems and policies. The following analyzes the problem from standard economic perspectives, and as part of a larger review of world-wide postwar currency issues prepared for the opening of the League of Nations. Written in late 1919, it not only discusses the currency problem, but (unintentionally) indicates the problems of daily exchange facing ordinary Russians as well as the government. Omitted is a discussion dealing with the history of Russian currency up to 1917. Its dispassionate description of economic chaos is perhaps a fitting end to this volume, and stands in sharp contrast to the optimism of the previous document.*

### SUMMARY.

At least eight different sorts of paper currency now circulate in Russia proper. Each of these is differently valued in different places, and none of them has any fixed or determinate value abroad. Banking has been nationalised and printing of notes is admittedly resorted to by the Soviet Government for the purpose of balancing a budget which, at the present rate of progress, is doubled about once every six months. Foreign debt, incurred before and during the War, would involve an annual change of at least £100 millions for interest. The State debt rose from 9.3 milliards of roubles in 1914 to 33.6 milliards at the beginning of 1917. At that date the note circulation amounted to over 9 milliards against 1,175 million roubles of gold reserve; to-day it probably exceeds 100 milliards, and a very large proportion is hoarded.

Exchange cannot be said to exist, as the foreign trade of Soviet Russia has come to a standstill. Internal trade can in many cases no longer be conducted even by barter.

If any re-organisation of currency is to be attempted, it will probably have to start afresh from the beginning....[Section I, on currency before the war, and the first part of Section II, on currency during the war, omitted—ed.]

In March, 1917, came the first revolution, which was marked, financially, by more rapid inflation of the currency and a great deal of domestic speculation. In November, 1917, the Bolsheviks obtained supreme power. Various portions of the old Russian Empire, representing, with Siberia, about one-quarter of the whole population, broke away from the centre (now, after many years, once more Moscow), and round the White and Black Seas, as well as in Siberia, Governments hostile to Moscow were established. The Bolshevik rulers, first from weakness and finally out of set purpose, pursued a policy of rapid inflation of the currency, and all connection with a gold standard was completely abolished—part of what gold remained having been removed by the Germans after Brest Litovsk. By the terms of the Armistice of 1918, Germany was compelled to hand over this stolen gold, which had already figured in the Reichsbank's weekly returns, to the Allies for safe custody on behalf of a reconstituted Russia. The present position in regard to this gold, the remains of the

Russian State Bank's own gold reserve, a small amount of Roumanian gold, and the foreign balances claimed by the Russian State Bank from pre-Bolshevik times, is a legal question of some obscurity.

The circulation of Russia roubles, which at 9 milliards at the beginning of 1917 had caused alarm, was largely increased during the Kerenski regime, so that the rate of exchange fell from 20 to 35, and the circulation had risen to 18 milliards. On 31st October, 1918, it was 50 milliards, and on 1st January, 1919, the Bolsheviks officially gave the figure as 55 milliards. On 30th June, 1919, it was officially given as 70 milliards, and unofficially but competently estimated at 85 to 100 milliards, including forgeries. It is now increasing at the rate of 40 milliards a year. Nor does this give a full account of what has taken place. For, according to the Bolshevik organ *Pravda*, economy of notes has been rendered necessary by the perpetual absorption of the output of notes by the peasant sellers of foodstuffs, who can buy hardly any of the tools which they need owing to the breakdown of importation, transport and domestic production, and this economy has been obtained by the "partial abolition of money payments between Government Departments, and the partial payment of State employees in kind."

Further, there are numerous issues of local currency in addition to those made by the various anti-Bolshevik Governments at Omsk, Tiflis, Archangel and elsewhere. Coupons of War Loans are also legal tender, and even the scrip of these loans may be used to make settlements between Governmental and semi-Governmental institutions.

It may be useful here to give a list of the various forms of paper money now in circulation in Russia, amounting in the autumn of 1919 to perhaps 100 milliards of roubles:—

(a) 'Tsar' or Romanoff notes, about 9 milliards genuine and an unknown quantity forged; this is an issue of the State Bank and beautifully printed.

(b) 'Duma' notes of 1,000 and 250 roubles, also a note of the State Bank, issued between March and November, 1917, and well printed. About 8 milliards genuine and an unknown quantity forged.

(c) 'Kerenskis,' called by the populace 'beer labels,' issued first by the Kerenski and now by the Bolshevik Governments. Small pieces of bad paper, khaki or green, inscribed in red with the statement that they represent 20 or 40 roubles.

(d) The new notes of the Bolshevik Government.

(e) Stamps, bearing on the back, in place of the gum, the legend that they are legal tender.

(f) Treasury bonds of the Omsk and Archangel Governments, bearing interest, used as legal tender in the areas controlled by these Governments. Also a currency printed at Tiflis.

(g) Local issues made by branches of the State Bank on the instructions of local Soviets (e.g., the Archangel 'walrus' notes issued before North Russia disowned the Bolsheviks).

(h) The North Russian currency, based on a reserve at the Bank of England, and referred to below.

For a short time after the Bolsheviks came into power scarcity of actual rouble notes in foreign centres and certain operations, political in origin, by foreign Governments in Russia itself, maintained the rate of exchange at about 40 to £1, though the real value was not half that. Thereafter, economic laws asserted themselves, and, though in certain places a buyer of Tsar notes (on which sentiment has placed a premium) will only be able to get 120 such roubles for £1, transactions have taken place in Kerenski 'beer labels' at 1,600 to the pound.

As was indicated above, this depreciation of the currency is now regarded with favour by the Bolshevik Government, which in June, 1919, decided to introduce a new note issue of its own (having hitherto relied on reproduction of old types of notes). According to the latest available reports, these notes are regarded by the populace as even more worthless than their predecessors, which are in consequence being driven out of active circulation to some

extent. These notes are apparently little different from food tickets, and it is the policy of the Government to educate the proletariat to dispense with money, the symbol of capitalism, altogether. Meanwhile, budgets are introduced half-yearly which are admittedly unreliable, and each of which is about double its predecessor. That for the first half of 1919 showed estimates of expenditure amounting to 50 milliards of roubles and revenue amounting to 20 milliards including about 4 milliards from taxes. The balance was to be met by the printing of notes.

### 3. THE SYSTEM OF CURRENCY AND BANKING AT PRESENT IN OPERATION

From what has been said above, it will be apparent that no detailed comparison of Russian finance in 1914 and 1919 is possible on the lines of the information obtainable about such countries as France, Italy, or even Germany. If the Bolshevik government persists, even in a modified form, money and banking in the conventional sense will have largely ceased to exist by the end of 1920. Any foreign business which Soviet Russia proposes to-day it apparently intends to do by barter. Proposals of this sort had already been made to Sweden in August, 1919. The banks, including after an interval the Co-operative or Moscow Narodni Bank, having been nationalised, all exchange in Russia would be controlled by the State.

The collapse of Russian currency is too complete to render any detailed analysis of value. Gresham's law has long since driven all metallic currency out of circulation. In some districts there is a premium on one type of note, in others of another. But notes of the Tsar regime stand everywhere at a premium over all other issues and are also regarded less unfavourably abroad. This premium does not appear to be based on any sound economic cause, for the Bolsheviks have printed Tsar notes in large quantities, and bundles of these notes, all with the same identification letters and numbers, are to be met with. But the fact is of importance to those who may ever have to reconstruct the rouble; for in currency matters thinking often makes it so, and the Russians really do think Tsar notes are worth more than others.

The foreign trade of Soviet Russia can hardly be considered here, owing to the political anomalies of the relationship of that country to the rest of the world; broadly speaking, barter is the only basis. Within the Soviet area barter fails, because the towns have nothing to offer the peasants. The latter no longer come into the towns looking for work and offering goods, but remain at home and grow what food they need themselves. Their stockings are filled with unprecedented quantities of notes, received as compensation for their property expropriated in the earlier days of the Revolution. Examples of barter need not be given; it is sufficient to refer to the appeals officially issued by Lenin to the industrialists of the 'Centro-Textile' and other State trusts to increase production in order to provide a stock of manufactured goods to barter against the peasants' wheat. The experiences of the Allied troops in North Russia in regard to the uselessness of ordinary currency and the value of cigarettes, &c., only confirm what is admitted by the Bolshevik Government.

It should be added that General Denikin's Government began in 1919 to ship goods consigned to its agent in England, the financing of the transaction in Russia being presumably handled by General Denikin.

### 4. FACTORS AFFECTING THE EXCHANGE POSITION

Considerations of Russia's foreign exchange system are also dominated by the anomalies and uncertainties of the political situation. The depreciation of currency, and uncertainty as to Russia's financial and political stability, cannot be exaggerated. If the Russian Government were to acknowledge its foreign debts the annual charge for interest thereon would amount to at least £100,000,000 or three times the amount of the Russian pre-War excess of visible exports. Any revival of Russia's exports would also have to be preceded by heavy importations of agricultural and other machinery for which minimum of foreign credit equal to about 50 millions sterling would be required. This credit would have to be regarded as a

definite addition to Russia's deadweight of debt abroad, and it would only be after the relative goods had been distributed than it would be worth while resuming normal trade. This trade in its turn would probably have to begin with at least normal amount of imports into Russia, against which Russia's principal exports are wheat, flax, timber, oil, metals, hides and butter, all of which command a ready market at high prices—if they can be exported.

#### 5. THE EFFECT OF DEPRECIATED AND FLUCTUATING EXCHANGES UPON INTERNATIONAL TRADE

For all practical purposes Russian 'exchange' no longer exists, and the problem of the effect of the fluctuation of the value of the rouble upon international trade has ceased to occupy the minds of commercial and financial authorities.

Those who are not prepared to accept Lenin's view that Russia's future foreign trade must be done by exchange of goods between Governments concern themselves with schemes for reconstituting the rouble or for creating a completely new currency.

#### 6. PROPOSALS FOR CURRENCY REFORM AND IMPROVEMENT OF EXCHANGE POSITION

An experiment has actually been made for reorganising in part Russia's currency and foreign exchange, namely, that devised by Mr. Keynes of the British Treasury, and actually put into force in 1918 in North Russia. This experiment, of more importance potentially than actually, is described in the *Economic Journal* for September, 1919. It consisted of an Emission Caisse issuing notes on the very conservative basis of a reserve of 75 per cent of foreign money, the notes being convertible into foreign money on the basis of this reserve and without guarantee from a foreign government. Reference should also be made to the fact that before depreciation had gone nearly so far as it has now gone, several proposals were made for the formation of a foreign or inter-allied bank, having the right both to receive deposits (and thus curtail inflation) and to issue its own notes, with or without a foreign or inter-allied guarantee. These proposals have not been revived in the present condition of Russian currency. It should also be said that in North Russia, in 1918, the provisional Government made a proposal that it should be empowered to issue notes guaranteed by the Allies against security of forest rights to be given the Allies; and other similar proposals have been discussed. To all these the objection applies that, if the notes were really of value, they would at best provide a means for foreign trade, but for internal purposes they would be rendered useless by Gresham's law. Judging by the actual operation of the same law in Russia itself, it would seem that the ordinary Russian is of opinion that, if the Bolshevik Government were overthrown, all currency except the 'Tsar' and perhaps the 'Duma' notes would be left out of any revaluation scheme. If Russia were thus restored to a pre-Bolshevik position in currency, she would find herself with a gold reserve of about 100 millions sterling and a genuine pre-Bolshevik note issue (excluding 'beer labels') of say about 16 milliards of roubles. In addition, her forged 'Tsar' and 'Duma' notes could hardly in practice be distinguished from the genuine, so that the difficulty of giving the rouble an intrinsic value of even 6d. would be considerable, even with a very low proportion of gold reserve.

The general conclusion of those who have studied the whole subject seems to be that reform of the currency in Russia can only proceed side by side with an extension of credit (e.g., 50 millions sterling, or the equivalent in dollars) for the import into Russia of the machinery, &c., which the inhabitants need, as a minimum, before they can really settle down to work once more.

League of Nations, International Secretariat, *Currencies After the Great War*, pp. 91-101.

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## GLOSSARY

The glossary is intended to assist those unfamiliar with Russian terminology of the period; many specific institutions are identified in headnotes to documents in which they are mentioned.

**All-Russian**—term often used to denote an institution which pertained to the entire RSFSR (Russian republic), such as in "All-Russian Congress of Soviets" or "All-Russian Cheka."

Used especially after implementation of constitution creating the RSFSR in 1918.

**artel**—artisan or agricultural cooperative.

**CC (TsK)**—Central Committee (of the Communist Party).

**CEC (TsIK)**—Central Executive Committee (executive of the Congress of Soviets). See also VTsIK.

**Cheka**—The All-Russian Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counter-Revolution and Sabotage; the political police.

**commissar** (sometimes commissioner, commissary)—Used to denote revolutionary officials in 1917, became the official term for the main government department heads in the Soviet government, used until 1946, as in "People's Commissar of Agriculture." Equivalent of Minister (European) or Secretary (American).

**Constituent Assembly**—assembly elected by general popular vote with right to determine future of Russia.

**Constitutional Democratic Party** (Constitutional Democrats, Kadets)—the major Russian liberal party.

**CPC**—See Council of People's Commissars.

**Council for Labor and Defense (STO)**—important council of the early Soviet government, responsible especially for coordinating economic and military issues.

**Council of People's Commissars** (Sovnarkom, CPC)—title of government established after Bolshevik revolution; used until 1946 when replaced by term Council of Ministers.

**desiatina**—traditional Russian land measurement; one desiatina = 2.7 acres or 1.09 hectares.

**ECCI**—Executive Committee of the Communist International.

**duma**—(1) the State Duma, the parliament from 1905-1917 (especially if capitalized); (2) name of city councils before the revolution.

**factory committee** (fabkom, fabzavkomy)—committee of workers in a factory, powerful in early part of revolution.

**gubernliia**—province, the main administrative subdivision of Russian empire and of the Soviet state until 1929.

**Gubkom**—Guberniia committee of the Communist Party.

**hectare**—metric land measurement, equals 2.47 acres.

**Izvestiia**—without a qualifier refers to the official newspaper of the Petrograd Soviet and then after the October Revolution of the Soviet government; many local soviet newspapers also tended to be named Izvestiia.

**Kadets**—See Constitutional Democratic Party.

**Komsomol**—Communist Youth League.

**kulak**—More prosperous peasant, generally able to hire labor; applied pejoratively by Bolsheviks to any peasant opposing their policies.

**Left SRs, Left Socialist Revolutionaries**—see Socialist Revolutionaries.

**Mensheviks**—main Russian Marxist party in opposition to Bolsheviks.

**Menshevik-Internationalists**—left wing of Mensheviks, often cooperated with Bolsheviks.

**Military Revolutionary Committee**—institution of the Petrograd Soviet which played key role in October Revolution and first months of Bolshevik power; existed in other cities also.

**MRC**—See Military Revolutionary Committee.

**Obkom**—Oblast committee of the Communist Party.

**obshchina**—traditional Russian peasant commune.

**oblast**—large administrative subdivision used in some regions instead of guberniia; roughly a province.

**okrug**—large administrative unit, usually subdivision of an oblast, equivalent to an uезд in a guberniia. Certain other types of administrative units also were called okrug also, such as some military districts.

**Party**—used, with or without capitalization, to mean the Communist Party, as in “the party intends to...”

**People’s Commissariat**—the chief administrative departments of the Soviet government; see commissar, above.

**Politburo**—Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party; effectively the key leadership body.

**Pravda**—central official paper of the Communist Party; some local Bolshevik papers used the title also.

**pud (pood)**—Russian measure of weight, equaling 36.11 lbs. or 16.38 kilograms.

**Rada**—lit., Ukrainian equivalent of “soviet.” Usually refers to the Ukrainian Central Rada set up in Kiev during the revolution and which proclaimed itself the government for Ukraine after the Bolshevik revolution.

**raion**—smaller administrative subdistrict in some rural areas; also in some larger cities.

**ralkom**—raion committee of the Communist Party.

**Revolutionary Tribunals**—special courts set up to expedite revolutionary justice and to deal with important political cases; there also were special revolutionary tribunals for press and other purposes.

**Revvoensovet**—Revolutionary Military Council.

**RKP(b)**—Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the party name from the name change of March, 1918 to 1925.

**RSDRP**—Russian Social Democratic Labor Party; without further clarification can refer to either the Bolsheviks or Mensheviks, or, less frequently, to smaller groups.

**RSDRP(b)**—Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (Bolsheviks), the usual designation for the Bolsheviks before change of party name in 1918.

**RSFSR**—Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic; official name of the new state under constitution of 1918. Later terms were reversed to current usage—Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic. Middle word translated variously as Federal, Federative or Federated.

**SNK**—Russian initials for Council of People’s Commissar (Sovnarkom); used infrequently in translations.

**Socialist Revolutionaries**—peasant oriented revolutionary party, largest party in 1917 and in Constituent Assembly. The left wing emerged in late 1917 as a virtual separate party, the Left SRs, and cooperated with the Bolsheviks during the first months after the October Revolution.

- Sovdeplla**—term used to designate area under Soviet control during the Civil War, often pejoratively (“conditions in Sovdeplla have....”).
- Soviet**—council in Russian. Used both as a short form name of the government (or for reference to its institutions, policies, etc.), and to refer to a variety of other institutions which use that term in their title, ie., call themselves a council.
- Soviet of People’s Commissars**—alternative translation of Council of People’s Commissars (soviet = council).
- Sovnarkom**—Commonly used abbreviation for Council of People’s Commissars, based on first syllable of each word (in Russian). See Council of People’s Commissars.
- SRs**—See Socialist Revolutionaries.
- STO**—Soviet for Labor and Defense. See Council for Labor and Defense.
- subbotnik**—special days of voluntary work without pay for the good of society, which later became largely mandatory; lit., “saturdays.”
- TsIK**—Central Executive Committee (executive of the Congress of Soviets).
- uezd**—administrative subdivision of a guberniia
- verst (versta)**—0.66 mile.
- Vesenka**—Supreme Council of the National Economy; also called VSNKh and Supreme Economic Council.
- volost**—rural administrative units within the uezd.
- VSNKh**—Supreme Council of the National Economy; also called Vesenka and Supreme Economic Council.
- VTsIK**—All-Russian Central Executive Committee, although often referred to simply as the Central Executive Committee, TsIK or CEC.
- zemstvo**—pre-revolutionary elected local and regional government institutions, especially in rural areas, with limited powers; abolished by Bolsheviks.

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The indexes contain page references to the documents and to the headnotes, but not to the Preface or Introduction. They tend to be inclusive rather than exclusive, especially for personal names and geographic places. Some minor persons and places mentioned only in passing, especially foreign ones, are omitted. The subject index includes numerous cross-references. Although there are headings for subjects such as Bolshevism, the Communist Party, the Civil War, such topics in fact pervade the documents and the collection. The index was prepared by Stephanie Fawcett Settle.

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